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# ARRAU

"KING AND EMPEROR COMBINED"

THE TIMES, LONDON  
JANUARY 18, 1977



ICM ARTISTS presents

# ARRAU



Philips Records, Steinway Piano

"One regards Arrau as a sort of miracle. He makes the piano live, like God teaching Adam on Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel roof; liquid, mysterious, profound, alive."

—*The Sunday Times, London*

"Very few pianists ever reach the peak of artistry from which Claudio Arrau functions. One has come to take Arrau's startling virtuosity and bronzen tone for granted over the years, but now the penetrating profundity and serene maturity of his interpretations are positively humbling."

—*The New York Times*

"Again and again one would like to elect him the King of Pianists."

—*Berliner Zeitung*

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# Concert: Philharmonic And Arrau at the Piano

By DONAL HENAHAN

When Claudio Arrau first performed as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic in 1943, Jiri Belohlavek had not yet been born. So, considering the gap in age and experience between the 82-year-old pianist and the 38-year-old Czechoslovak conductor, one would not have been surprised to find their appearance together Wednesday night in Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto going less than smoothly. No serious problems developed, however. Mr. Belohlavek proved to be a sympathetic collaborator with a taut but not bellicose approach, which allowed Mr. Arrau to give a masterly account of the score.

Mr. Arrau's renowned technical equipment still is in fine working order. On a couple of occasions, he took difficult passages slightly more carefully than the momentum of the music dictated, and the rondo finale tended to break up into well-played sections rather than sustaining its galloping ebullience. But what Mr. Arrau offers at this stage of his career is something beyond mere fluency. There was genuine nobility and sweep to the opening movement, if not the extroverted grandeur of a Rubinstein or the gripping fierceness of a Serkin. However, the most interesting and characteristic moments in this "Emperor" were those in which the piano would respond subtly and introspectively to the orchestra's military flourishes. Mr. Arrau played with an affecting directness of expression, notably so in the Adagio, and much more simply than he did when I first heard him some 35 years ago. Now the externals have fallen away, like a scaffolding no longer needed, and the musical structure can be seen unhindered.

Not that Mr. Arrau's "Emperor" has become emotionally austere or tonally bleak in the manner of, say, Wilhelm Backhaus. In fact, the tone he produced, with the aid of a mellifluous piano (a German Steinway, by the sound of it) caressed the ear, particularly in the usually shallow and glassy upper three octaves. It is always a mistake, however, to place too much emphasis on the instrument a musician uses. As someone once observed, Heifetz could make a cigar box with strings sound like a Stradivarius if he had to, but most violinists

## The Program

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC, Jiri Belohlavek, conductor; Claudio Arrau, pianist, At Avery Fisher Hall.  
Divertimento ..... Bartok  
Piano Concerto No. 5 ("Emperor") .... Beethoven  
Symphony No. 7 ..... Dvorak

can make a Strad sound like a cigar box. No doubt Mr. Arrau could make a toy piano sound good.

Mr. Belohlavek, although somewhat overshadowed by his senior partner, led a welcome and absorbing performance of Bartok's Divertimento for String Orchestra. This wonderful piece, dating from 1940, is often heard in a version for reduced strings that can give it a lean and rather astringent sonority. With the Philharmonic's string sections at full strength, however, Mr. Belohlavek was able to get a voluptuous sound that softened Bartok's angular lines somewhat but lent the score a pleasingly ruminative quality. Charles Rex, the associate concertmaster, played his solo passages with buttery smoothness and he, along with the leaders of the other four string sections, was granted a well-deserved bow.

It is worth noting, I think, that while the Philharmonic strings held the stage alone in the Bartok, without the domineering presence of the orchestra's brawnier-toned sections, they produced a strikingly rich and homogeneous sound. But when Dvorak's Symphony No. 7 (Op. 70), after intermission, brought on the full orchestra and set the brass to braying mightily, the strings once again lost most of their luster and fullness. The conductor could not, or at least did not, affect a proper balance.

## Carnaval Brazil

Grupo Batucada and Loremil Machado with the Sarava Bahia Band will play Brazilian music, and Mr. Machado's group will perform the gymnastic martial-arts dance known as capoeira, at Carnaval Brazil 85, tonight and tomorrow at the Manhattan Center, 311 West 34th Street (212) 279-7740. There will be dancing, costumes and music from 10 P.M. to 6 A.M.; tickets are \$20.





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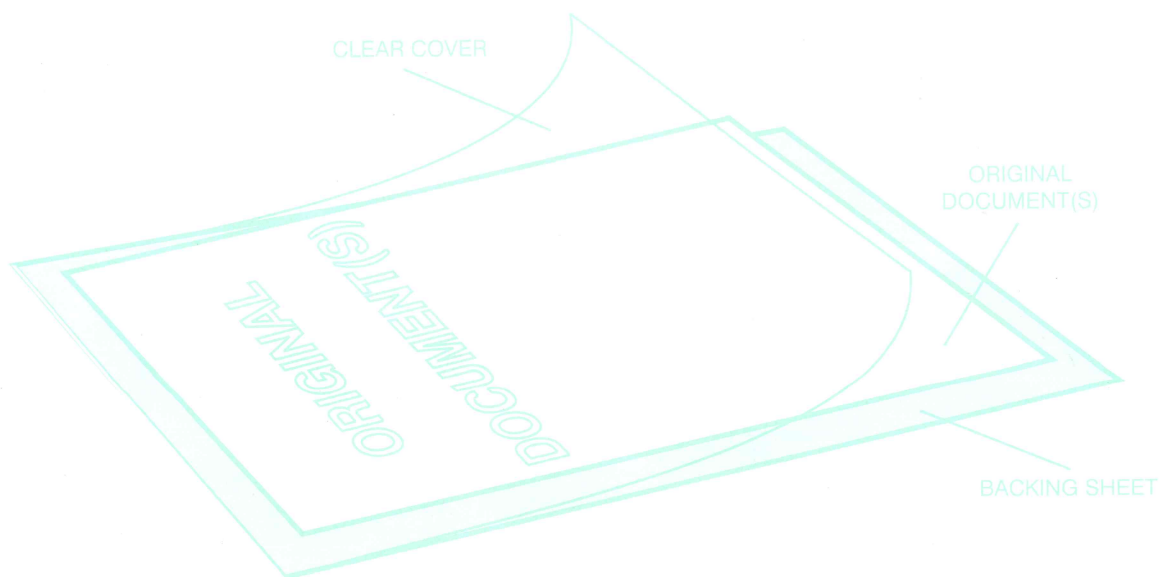
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(q1)

(q1)

CLAUDIO ARRAU notes. on phone. 26 Nov. 84(q1)

(q1)

Just returned from East Germany, where recorded Fourth and(ep)

Fifth Beethoven Concertos with Dresden orchestra; had never(ep)

played with them before. Colin Davis, conductor. marvelous(ep)

orchestra. wonderful spirit. will return later to record(ep)

Nos. 1 through 3..(q1)

1. What drives you? Why still touring?(ep)

Well, for me, a life without performing would be no life at all. I love it. People ask me when I will retire. I don't know that I ever will.(q1)

2. What keeps you from becoming cynical?(ep)

I still believe in a lot of things. I still find a lot of beauty in the world.(q1)

3. If you could go back, what would you change in your career?(ep)

I think I would change nothing. I never had a moment of doubt that I was born to do just what I was doing. If I strayed from the path, it was never for long.(q1)

4. How do you keep your equanimity when you encounter(ep)

poor pianos?(ep)

My teacher, Martin Krause, used to say that one has to be(ep)

able to make something out of every piano, that the (ep)

challenge is to find the right technique or the right(ep)

approach for each instrument we meet. Of course, in (ep)

recent years, pianos all over the world have improved,(ep)

the average everywhere is higher than it was.(q1)

5. In 1984, why are the Waldstein and Appassionata sonatas

still relevant?



For me, I mean, they inspire me again and again to work toward improving my performance. Once in a while, a work may not interest me for a while, but if it is a great work, I will come back to it, again and again.(q1)

6. Why recording the Beethoven concertos for the third time? Is it for perfection, or a new approach? Do you renounce your former recordings of them?(ep)

I hope only to record my attitude, my approach, to that work at the moment. There are still slight differences between my approach at one time and my approach later. No, no, I do not renounce the earlier recordings; they represent certain times in my development. they are actually valid.(q1)

7. What are you reading these days?(ep)

First Nigel Calder's book on Einstein, a very fascinating book. I come close to an understanding of his theories.(ep)

Then, a book in German, a history of Hellenistic remains after Alexander the Great, and what happened to those countries.(ep)

I am always reading heavy things (laughs).(q1)  
(q1)

An enduring innocence.(q1)

turns 82 on Feb. 6, 1985.(q1)

“reading the scores again and again.”

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File Arrau

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By DANIEL CARIAGA

Just back from Dresden, where he recorded the G-major and E-flat Piano Concertos of Beethoven as the first installment on his third complete recording of all five concertos, Claudio Arrau sounds tired, but not unbearably so. He is looking forward, he indicates, to coming to Los Angeles this week.(ep)

At 81, Arrau still continues to tour, still resists the lures of retirement.(ep)  
"People always ask me when I plan to retire. I don't know that I ever will. For me, a life without performing would be no life at all. I love it."(ep)

And he loves the music he plays, even the music he has played for seven and more decades. His program for Wednesday night, in the Pavilion of the Music Center, for instance, an agenda offering Beethoven's "Waldstein" and "Appassionata" sonatas and Liszt's B-minor Sonata.(ep)

"Hackneyed, don't you think?" Arrau, reached by phone at his home on Long



stand, and his career from California.(ep)  
“For me, these works inspire me again and again, to work toward improving my performance. Yes, once in a while, a work may not interest me for a short period of time. Then, later, I will come back to it.”(ep)

Why has he chosen to record the Beethoven concertos one more time? Is he renouncing his earlier recordings?(ep)

“Renounce them? No, no, not at all. I hope only to record my attitude, my approach at that moment. Of course, there will be slight differences between my approach at one time, and later. The earlier recordings represent certain times in my development. They are actually valid.”(ep)

How does Arrau keep his equanimity when faced with some of the poor pianos one can encounter on tour?(ep)

“My teacher, Martin Krause, used to say that one has to be able to make something out of every piano, that the challenge is to find the right technique or the right approach for each instrument. But pianos all over the world have improved since those days, the average is much higher than it was.”(ep)

Still a voracious reader, Arrau mentioned two books in which he is currently immersed.(ep)

“First, Nigel Calder’s book on Einstein, ‘Einstein’s Universe’—a very fascinating book. I really think I am coming close to an understanding of Einstein’s theories.”(ep)

“Then, a history of the remaining Hellenistic nations, and what happened to them after the time of Alexander the Great. That book is in German.”(ep)

He pauses long enough to laugh at himself.(ep)

“Yes, I am always reading the heavy stuff.”

# BIOGRAPHY

December, 1982

## CLAUDIO ARRAU

Musical education in Germany.

Was taught by Martin Krause, one of Liszt's last pupils.

Wins Liszt Prize. Awarded for the first time in 45 years 1919

Wins Liszt Prize again 1920

Début in the United States with the Boston and Chicago Symphony Orchestras 1923

Makes his first recording - on piano rolls 1926

Winner of the International Pianists' Contest, Geneva 1927

Tours Russia 1929

Returns for second tour 1930

Played all of Bach's keyboard music in 12 concerts in Berlin 1935

Series on the music of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert followed

Returned to the U.S. giving sensational Carnegie Hall recital 1941

Named "Favourite Son of Mexico," the highest Mexican award in the arts 1949

Broadcasts Beethoven's 32 Piano Sonatas and the "Diabelli" Variations on B.B.C. Radio 1951

Has travelled the world, giving solo recitals and performing with leading orchestras and at the major music festivals.

Recordings include complete sets of Beethoven's piano sonatas and piano concertos. Arrau's discography is a monument to his amazing virtuosity and musicianship.





Awarded French "Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et les Lettres"	1965
Received a Deutscher Schallplattenpreis for his recordings of Beethoven's piano concertos	1965
Returned to U.S.S.R. for concerts in Moscow and Leningrad	May, 1968
Invited as early as 1967 to appear at the 1970 Beethoven Festival in Bonn, where he played the "Emperor" Concerto and an all-sonata recital	
Received a Deutscher Schallplattenpreis for his recordings of Schumann's piano works	1969
Received a Deutscher Schallplattenpreis for his recordings of Brahms's Piano Concertos	1970
received Bundes Verdienst Kreuz, a German distinction, from West German Chancellor Willy Brandt at the climax of the Beethoven Bi-centenary celebrations in Bonn	September, 1970
Received an Edison for his Liszt recital recording	1971
New edition Beethoven Sonatas for Peters: first volume published	1973
Records complete music for piano and orchestra by Chopin	1973
Liszt Record Grand Prix for his recording of Liszt's Complete Concert Paraphrases on Operas by Verdi	1975
Celebrated his 75th birthday and his 70th season as a concert artist with new recordings of Liszt's "Transcendental" Studies	1978
Presented with Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's coveted Hans von Bülow medal in recognition of his outstanding contribution to music during his long career	1978
Renowned worldwide for his playing of Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, Chopin, Mozart and Liszt	
Received the Liszt Society Grand Prix du Disque for his recording of the "Transcendental" Studies and 3 Concert Studies.	1979
Recording of Schumann's Complete works for piano received a "Caecilia" award from the Union de la Presse Musicale Belge	1979

Claudio Arrau

- 3 -

Received the 1979 "Diapason d'Or" for his  
recording of the Chopin Nocturnes

1979

Received the Liszt Society Grand Prix du  
Disque for his recording of the Piano  
Concertos Nos. 1 & 2

1982



CLAUDIO ARRAU: THE COMPLETE ARTIST

Size and scope are features which have distinguished the career of Claudio Arrau. Even in his seventies, after more than 70 active years in the concert hall, he still plans a substantial amount of performances a year, drawing from his vast repertoire, which ranges from Bach to Messiaen.

Outside music, Arrau is interested in a wide range of subjects, including art, history, politics, psychology, and the theatre. These show the profound influence of Martin Krause, who first heard the young Arrau in Berlin in 1913. Arrau was then ten years old, and had been in the German capital for two years; but through endless exercises and "dull teaching" he had become disillusioned and bored with music.

Krause had been a pupil of Liszt's who had in turn been a pupil of Czerny's, who had studied with Beethoven. Claiming that "this child will be my masterpiece," Krause assumed responsibility not only for Claudio's musical education, but also for his education in general. Although he was very demanding, he taught above all else that "an artist cannot be a great artist without interest in all the arts, in all of life."

Arrau's own teaching also places great emphasis on interior development, going far beyond notation and technique: "I think the great interpreter should be well integrated in all aspects of life." In addition, being proud of his noble musical pedigree, Claudio Arrau feels it is his duty to pass on what was given to him. However, his teaching is through the spoken word, not by demonstration: "I talk about the work, give a general idea, and then go over every detail. You have to help apply these ideas, but never by performing. The student, once having windows opened for him must be made to go in on his own."

Self-reliance was indeed forced cruelly on the young Arrau. In 1918 Krause died of pneumonia, and left him "inconsolably alone." Arrau reached a crisis. He felt that, if he went to any other teacher, he would spoil what he had learnt from Krause. When he felt able to resume playing he had to fight the idea that prodigies never mature, that he was a "Wunderkind" past his prime. But he overcame this prejudice, and managers and conductors began to realise that he was an artist to be taken seriously. The first step towards this recognition was the Liszt Prize, which had not been awarded for 45 years, and which was presented Arrau in both 1919 and 1920.

The 'twenties saw the establishment of Arrau's professional career. There were tours to the United States, England, Russia, South America. In 1925 he was appointed professor at the Stern Conservatory, Berlin; and his first recordings were made in the following year.

The climb towards prominence continued. In 1935, in a series of 12 concerts in Berlin, Arrau became the first musician to play all of Bach's keyboard music in public; series on Mozart, Beethoven,



and Schubert followed. Although these series began as a conscious effort to call attention to his career and achievement, Arrau also discovered that "by knowing all a composer's output, you can understand each work better. You grasp relationships, the whole creative life. You grow yourself."

His reputation spread throughout the continent; but the approaching war in Europe forced Arrau, at the height of his fame, to settle in the United States, and to rebuild his career. Soon Arrau had won a place in the hearts of his audiences, and he himself dates his international career from his success at a Carnegie Hall recital in 1941.

Since then he has made his home in New York, with a summer house and 400 acre farm at Vermont; since the end of the war he has again played in all parts of the world. Everywhere he has been acclaimed.

Fittingly, performances by Arrau featured prominently in the Beethoven Bi-centenary Celebration in 1970; and for his dedication to the works of Beethoven throughout a long and distinguished career, the Maestro was awarded the "Bundes Verdienst Kreuz" by Chancellor Willy Brandt.

Obviously, in a career spanning more than half a century, staleness is a potential problem. However, "the moment I find any suggestion of routine in my interpretation of a certain work, I put it aside... Then, when I come back to a piece that I've put aside, I study it again from the beginning." Working in this way, Arrau can justifiably claim that "each concert should always be an event."

Recordings, on the other hand, are documents: "Live performances are more spontaneous, and they change from day to day. Out of all these experiences you try, in the studio, to distill the essence... to present something that may be valid for a long time." Among Arrau's many recordings for the Philips label are the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, as well as the five piano concerts; the two Brahms concertos, which received a Deutscher Schallplattenpreis in 1970; the complete works for piano and orchestra by Chopin, and the complete piano works of Schumann for which he received a Deutscher Schallplattenpreis in 1969. One leading critic neatly summarised the kind of international acclaim accorded to his Schumann recordings: "Arrau, this noble poet of the piano, with his unobtrusive mastery, his intellectually controlled technique, his sensitivity, was predestined for Schumann's world of expression."

It was both characteristic and appropriate that Arrau, having studied with Krause, should have chosen to celebrate his 75th birthday and his 70th season as a concert artist in 1978 with new recordings of Liszt's "Transcendental" Studies, among the most demanding works in all piano



literature. This disc was later to win him the Liszt Society 1979 Grand Prix du Disque. In the first year that the Liszt Record Grand Prix was awarded (1975) Claudio Arrau had received the prize for his recording of the Complete Concert Paraphrases on operas by Verdi. In 1982 he received the Liszt Society Grand Prix for the third time for his rendering of the Piano Concertos Nos. 1 & 2. During 1978 he was presented with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's coveted Hans von Bülow medal in recognition of his outstanding contribution to music during his long career. In 1980 the leading French record magazine "Diapason" awarded his recording of the Chopin Nocturnes with the 1979 "Diapason d'Or." His most recent recordings have included Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, Debussy's Préludes, Books I and II, Schubert's Sonata in C minor, and Liszt's Dante Sonata, the "Funerailles" and "Six Chopin Songs."

Besides all his playing engagements, Arrau has found time to prepare a new edition of the Beethoven piano sonatas, quickly accepting the opportunity to put down his ideas on interpretation.

And yet, despite crowded performing and teaching schedules, his dedication does not wane, and his artistry still evolves: "Now I play with more joy and abandon and confidence and discipline than I have ever before." That his playing can encompass and integrate such apparently opposed qualities is a measure of Arrau's mastery, and of his inexhaustible vitality. His mind is never at rest from its quest for any facet of life which may shed a little more light on the art of music. Life is thus for Arrau a continual aspiration towards a state of empathy with the composer, and the achievement of which has been the key to his international success.







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His ambitions seem to be growing, not receding.



## Claudio Arrau at 80—The Years Have Deepened His Art

By BERNARD HOLLAND

**C**laudio Arrau's piano recital at Avery Fisher Hall this afternoon will celebrate his 80th birthday and, at the same time, bestow a twofold gift on his listeners. For every so often, nature produces a musician who achieves great age without relinquishing his powers of communication, and events like today's not only compress 70-odd years of practical performing experience into two hours of music; they tell us in fascinating ways how age can transform how we think and how we hear.

Few of the living can see Mr. Arrau's career as a whole — it stretches far too far into the past. But clearly this long musical life — begun in Chile in 1903 and nurtured in Berlin before World War I — serves as connective tissue between the emotional generosity of the Romantic era and the respectful restraint of mid-20th century interpretive philosophy. Mr. Arrau's teacher in those Berlin years was Martin Krause — a pupil of Liszt. Yet it has been in the 1950's, 60's and 70's — an age of new classicism among performers — that Mr. Arrau's major recording projects have taken place. Rarely have two separate traditions been so successfully bonded together in one man, and for those who cannot share today's concert, there is the phonograph to assure us that all these qualities are really there.

The Arrau birthday celebration has the record companies busy. There is and will continue to be a flood of releases — some reaching back to his days with Colum-

bia Records in the 1940's, others covering his massive projects for Philips Records in the 60's and 70's, and still others — very new, fascinatingly different and also for Philips — showing how the years have shaped one of this century's important musical personalities.

Mr. Arrau first came to Berlin at the age of 8, and it was there he heard the pianist Teresa Carreño. "From hearing her, I first experienced ease and naturalness in technique," said Mr. Arrau recently. "I was taken to all her concerts, and I can remember going backstage and sitting on her lap. She gave me candy and told me to work hard."

"And Busoni changed me too," he went on. "I will never forget the way he played the Liszt Sonata and the Beethoven 'Hammerklavier.' He took great liberties with the music, and that kind of approach I have discarded. But the freedom and the imagination — they have taught me much."

Mr. Arrau says he plans to record Busoni's elaborate "Fantasia contrappuntistica" and also Schoenberg's Concerto and solo literature, but why do we associate his name so little with contemporary music? "I have played it all my life," he replied. "I gave the first performance of the Prokofiev Third Concerto in Mexico, and I was one of the first to play the Stravinsky Capriccio. I love the Ives Sonata, and I am always looking at Stockhausen and Cage. I would love to play the Boulez Second Sonata, but I would not have time to memorize it, given my other commitments. I do not feel I can prop-

*Continued on Page 17*





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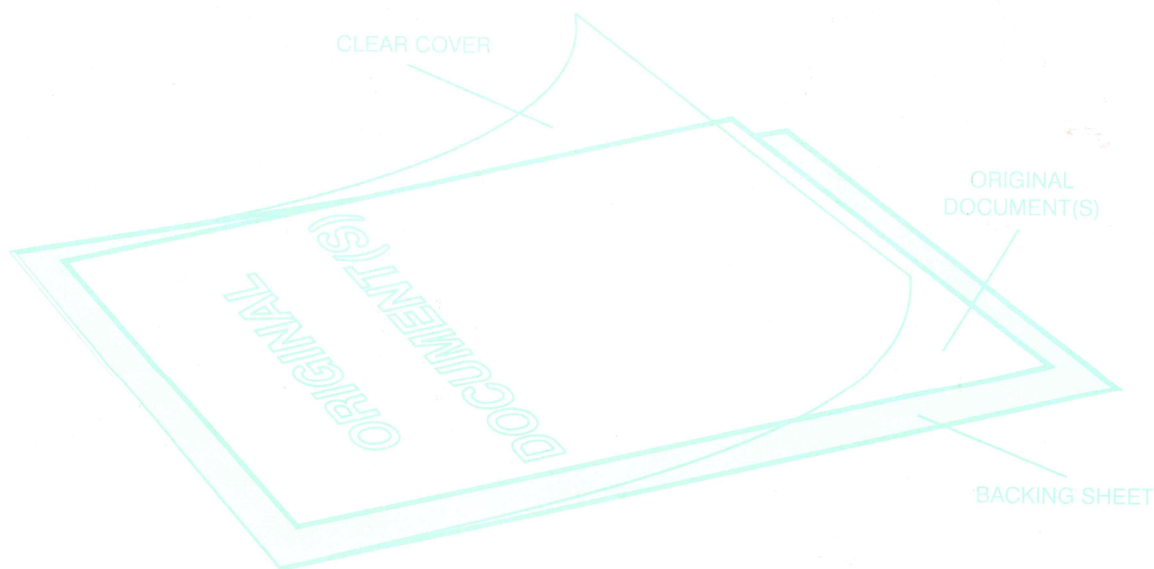
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Continued from Page 1

# Claudio Arrau

erly interpret any piece if I have to look at the music.

"I am also planning the Beethoven 'Diabelli' Variations, the Debussy 'Etudes,' and I shall be re-recording the five Beethoven piano concertos probably with Eugen Jochum and the Vienna Philharmonic." And there will be some Mozart — music which Mr. Arrau played widely as a young man but has rarely recorded. "It just never came about," he said, "but I will do a collection of sonatas and smaller pieces in the near future."

As to his 80 years, friends say that Mr. Arrau is pensive yet proud. He boasts a sister who at 86 is active and barely gray. His great grandmother, he said, survived to 120. "Age is biological," he observed, "but psychologically when I am playing I feel like a young man. My muscles have acquired a wisdom of their own, and I think they are now working better than ever." At 80, his ambitions seem to be growing, not receding. After his American tour this season, he will play the two Brahms concertos with Daniel Barenboim and the Orchestre de Paris within the space of two days.

Mr. Arrau's association with Columbia Records, now CBS Masterworks, during the 1940's and early 50's is being remembered with a three-record set (M3 37866). The repertoire ranges from Liszt, to Schumann and Chopin, to Debussy and Ravel. Of particular interest are previously unreleased items — the Schumann "Arabesque" made in 1947 and from two years later, the "Ondine" and "Le Gibet" movements from Ravel's "Gaspard de la Nuit." The concluding "Scarbo" was never recorded.

But by far the biggest project comes from Philips, for whom Mr. Arrau has recorded exclusively for over 20 years. The first two installments of this eight-volume, 59-record issue are the 32 Beethoven sonatas, remastered on 14 disks (Phi 6768351) and a six-record box of the same composer's five piano concertos plus the Triple Concerto (Phi 6768350). The next volumes to come are Schumann and Grieg on 10 records, Schubert on four,

Chopin on nine, Liszt on seven, Brahms on five and Debussy on three. Close to half of these records have been remastered exclusively for this special edition, but most items are available separately.

There is a fascinating progression at work in these recordings — from the brisk masculinity and high spirits of the earlier work, to an increasing balance between passion and repose in the 1960's and early 70's, to an altogether different world in the past few years. The CBS "Arabesque," for example, is full of vitality, but when Mr. Arrau comes to the same piece exactly 20 years later, compulsion gives way to less hurried, more detailed scrutiny. The Schumann "Kreisleriana" of 1972 has, similarly, a rounder, softer quality, without the unbending excitement that drives the 1946 recording on CBS.

But as Mr. Arrau has progressed into his 70's, a whole new world of time seems to have emerged. The Liszt E Flat Concerto, recorded three years ago with Colin Davis and the London Symphony Orchestra, is perhaps the most striking example of this change — Mr. Arrau's clean-cut, virile animation of 1952 planed and softened into a performance which, though less aggressive in sheer force, is far grander in its quieter way. This majestic slowness is not lazy but moves as in a dream. We are privy to every curve and corner of Liszt's craftsmanship. How clearly Mr. Arrau defines it all and how beautiful it sounds. These pianistic colors are drawn from the instrument as if by levitation. The piano, as we are often told, is at heart a percussion instrument. His touch, however, exerts a gentle suction on the keyboard.

Intentionally or not, Mr. Arrau seems also to be telling us that, as our years on earth become fewer, so can our concept of time and its passage stretch and broaden. These slower tempos indicate no weakness or failing physical powers — note, on the contrary, the delicate control and

power in the Liszt Concerto and Mr. Arrau's fierceness in the same composer's "Transcendental Etudes," recorded for Philips in 1976.

Indeed, this slowness shows not a loss of power but a redefinition of what power means — that its true nature resides not necessarily in volume and velocity but in the unifying gravitational force we call form or proportion. Age, in other words, need not rob us of delight and passion; it may simply provide a new way to clarify and explain them.

Not all older musicians react this way. Verdi's "Falstaff," the work of an octogenarian, is as brisk as any Verdian opera, and the conducting tempos of the late Karl Böhm, if anything, grew faster with age. But those who remember Arthur Rubinstein's television appearances in his late 80's will understand this redefinition of time.

"Some of my tempos in Beethoven actually are a little faster than they once were," said Mr. Arrau, "but I agree that most are slower. Over the years, as one penetrates deeper into the depths of music, that deepness broadens one's sense of time." It is a process which seems markedly to affect his playing of Schubert, and it is only in this latest recording period that Schubert has been given such attention. Why has he waited so long to record the Schubert sonatas?

"His music is the greatest interpretive problem in the piano literature," said Mr. Arrau. "One learns it only gradually. Schubert's sonatas combine so many elements — the influence of Beethoven, the Austrian folklore, and the special sense of melancholy. To bring them all together is very difficult indeed. Perhaps this is why I have waited." There are two other Schubert sonata recordings from his most recent output — the Sonata in A (D. 664) and the C minor (D. 958), both on Philips.

His 1980 recording of the Schubert B Flat Sonata shows Mr. Arrau's lingering sensibility taken to its extreme. In the first movement, every 16th note





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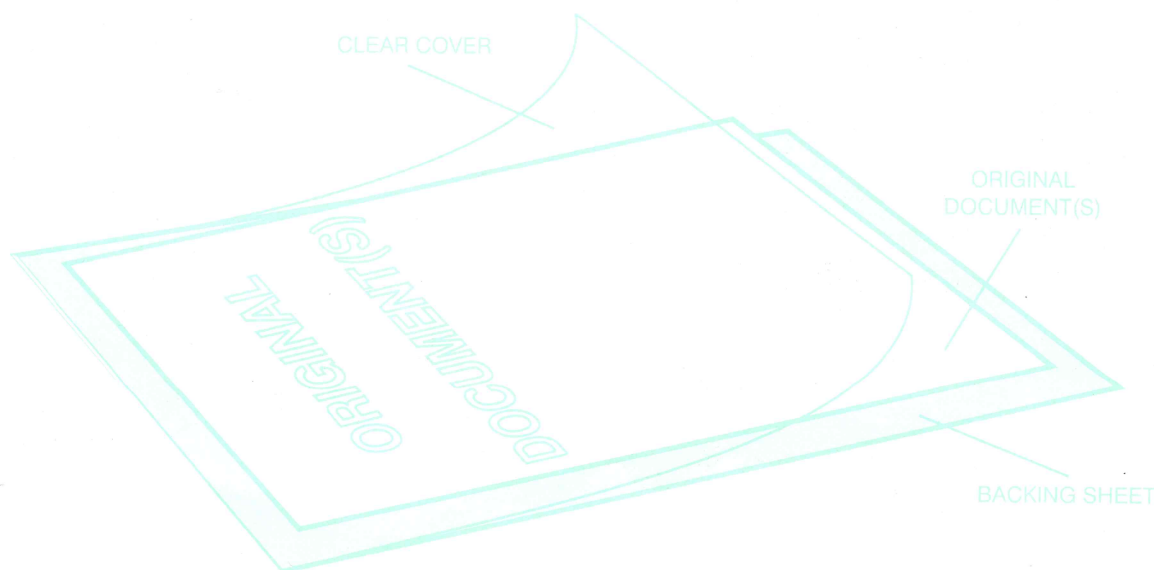
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figure is carefully turned over and examined, yet the simplicity of Schubert's melodic momentum seems never disrupted. Mr. Arrau takes the repeat — where most musicians, noting the movement's great length, arrive at the double bar and continue on ahead. This is Schubert playing of a special kind, and if it seems to lack a heroism or a drama, it is because Mr. Arrau rises above heroism and drama and operates on a wholly different communicative plane.

The great Andante, however, seems a failure for the very reasons the first movement succeeds. The A Major section comes wonderfully to life, but elsewhere Mr. Arrau seems reluctant to do what Schubert demands of him — to play Andante, at a walking tempo. The pianist's ponderousness here buries the movement under a weight it was not intended to support.

Mr. Arrau's fondness for Debussy has continued into his later years, and among his newer releases are the "Estampes," the "Images" complete, and both books of the Preludes. All were recorded in 1979. The trend from the dynamic youth to relaxed old age is also clear in these pieces. From "Estampes," the "Pagodes" and "Soirée dans Grenade" are much faster in the CBS version of 1949. In "Jardins sous la pluie," the younger Arrau is dryer and more driven, while in the Philips version, there is movement but movement with an illusion of stillness. The phrasing in all these Debussy pieces is rubato-laden — more Lisztian than classical in concept — and it will not be to every taste.

But if we were to choose one from the hundreds of separate items contained on Philips's 59 records, one inclusive example of Mr. Arrau's gleaming coloristic touch, it would not be Debussy but a piece which greatly influenced Debussy's development — "Les Jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este" by Liszt. "Reflets dans l'eau" from the "Images" may echo Liszt's evocation of water and sunlight, but it can never really match it. Mr. Arrau plays this piece with an ear for color, a respect for proportion and a quiet passion that comes perhaps only with the years. ■



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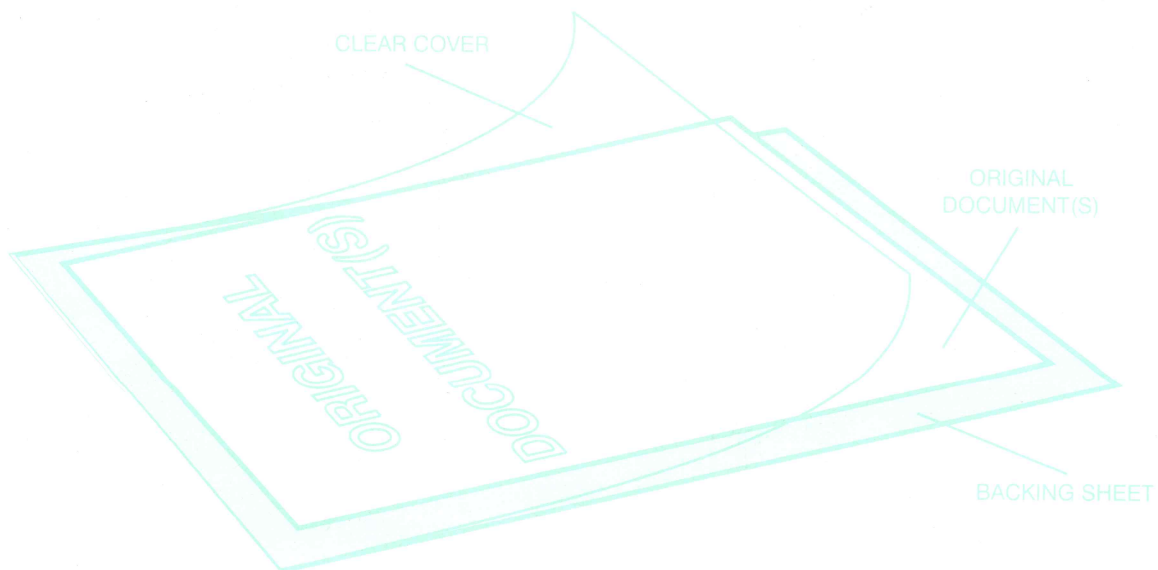
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# Music: Arrau Marks 80th Birthday With a Recital

By EDWARD ROTHSTEIN

CLAUDIO ARRAU celebrated his 80th birthday at Avery Fisher Hall yesterday afternoon with a piano recital that affirmed his position as a 20th-century virtuoso. He studied with Martin Krause, a student of Liszt, but his own approach to music is serious rather than theatrical, scrupulous rather than improvisatory. Compared with an earlier generation, Mr. Arrau is more controlled than Arthur Schnabel, more disciplined than Alfred Cortot, less a colorist than Walter Gieseking.

Mr. Arrau's artistry to the surface. And it was the musical image of water that seemed to allow that artistry to flourish.

"Les Jeux d'Eaux à la Villa d'Este," from Liszt's "Années de Pèlerinage" was explored in a masterly manner. The carefully weighted voicings gave the music a fluid texture, with glints of bright reflections overlaying a languid, drifting world. Similarly, Debussy's "Reflets dans l'Eau" was graceful, its reflections viewed with such clarity that the music's rippling surface and its more languorous depths were equally revealed.

Yea Mr. Arrau is not a "structural" player of the Germanic school, nor does he dissect and reconstruct a composition, letting its cogs and connecting rods themselves become of interest. In fact, he stands between the self-involved Romanticism of the 19th century and the refined attention to detail and structure of this one.

For, on this occasion, as in many of his recent recordings, Mr. Arrau's seriousness was much in evidence in the most lyrically Romantic repertoire. The less the structure had to be articulated, and the more it could seem to grow, the more interesting the playing became.

It was Liszt, then, not Beethoven,

Mr. Arrau's entire recital had the sort of pacing evident in these performances. It was clearly not sensation itself he was after, but the sort of double image of music's active surface and its more reflective depths. Even in Liszt's Ballade No. 2 in B minor — a musical unfolding of the Hero and Leander story — it was the oceanic swimming of Leander that was dominant in the performance.

Unfortunately, the music of Beethoven suffered from this double vision. The music's power comes from articulation on its surface, from attention to the development of motifs from the play of harmonies; it is out of surface matters that the deeper spirit of such



Sophie Baker

Claudio Arrau

works as the "Waldstein" and "Appassionata" Sonatas grows.

But Mr. Arrau provided little sense of detail. The opening phrases of the "Appassionata" were played without attentiveness to the conflicts already

taking shape; the final movement of the "Waldstein" had a uniform calm, with tasteful articulations and a restrained tempo, but harmonic transformations and the play of syncopations were sacrificed for an unconvincing fluidity. The slow movements found Mr. Arrau most at home; the framing movements found him attempting to turn these works into meditative musings rather than almost novelistic dramas.

This preference, and its success in the works of Debussy and Liszt, is partly due to Mr. Arrau's maturity and a calm reflectiveness that found its way even into Chopin's Scherzo No. 1 in B minor (Op. 20). Despite the repertoire, this was not Romantic pianism; and despite its cultivated control, it was not modern pianism. It was unique, and worthy of honor for its own sake.

Yesterday's honors also included a mixture of the modern and the Romantic. Martin Segal, president of Lincoln Center, read a telegram from President Reagan, praising Mr. Arrau's "clarity and expressiveness." And Robert Becker, president of the Beethoven Society, presented Mr. Arrau with the Beethoven Medal, hung on a crimson ribbon, honoring his "service to the world of music and the creative spirit of Ludwig van Beethoven."

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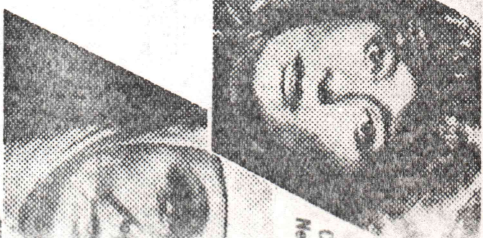
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## ARRAU 80th BIRTHDAY SEASON PLANS

During the 1982/83 concert season, the whole world of music will join in marking the 80th birthday year of Claudio Arrau, one of this century's greatest living pianists.

From late October to the following September, when he will appear at the Edinburgh Festival, the entire year will be given over to celebratory occasions in order to give each city in which he will play a chance to participate.

In New York, there will be six appearances: two at Carnegie Hall, two at Avery Fisher and two at the 92nd St. Y, ranging from October to February, the actual birthday month. Avery Fisher's "Great Performers" Series will have the honor (reserved two years in advance) of presenting Arrau in the birthday recital, but on February 20th not the actual birthday date of February 6 because on February 4 and 5 Arrau will be playing with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Philadelphia which will be televised.

In March, Arrau is scheduled to play the two Brahms Concertos in Paris with the Orchestre de Paris under Daniel Barenboim. In Berlin, it will be the Berlin Philharmonic in April as well as the Bonn Festival, where he will give two Beethoven recitals. In London, his recital at the Royal Festival Hall in May will be a benefit for Amnesty International, his personal birthday gift to the cause of





universal freedom. And in June, there will be a special Gala recital at the Paris Opera which also will be televised. In between, there will be concerts and Festival appearances in the major cities of the U.S., Canada and Europe.

Topping everything, will be the release by Philips Records of "The Claudio Arrau Edition" of 59 records in 9 albums. CBS Records will be issuing a package of 3 recordings from the 1940s and 50s and EMI is also issuing a 3-record anniversary set.

In addition, Knopf will bring out "CONVERSATIONS WITH ARRAU" by Joseph Horowitz this coming September.

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## NEW BOOK "CONVERSATIONS WITH ARRAU"

PUBLISHED THIS MONTH BY KNOFF

Book in stores now marking beginning of 80th anniversary birthday season

World renowned pianist Claudio Arrau begins his 80th anniversary season shortly, which will include numerous performances in major halls and festivals around the world. In celebration of the event, Arrau is a subject of a new book published by Alfred A. Knopf titled "Conversations with Arrau" and written by Joseph Horowitz.

According to Horowitz, the book is part biography, part reminiscence, part testimony. It is a portrait of one of the great pianists of our time. "Conversations with Arrau" reveals the pianist as a latter-day personification of a Romantic paradigm: the solitary, striving, suffering artist, part hero, part man-child. In this light, Horowitz reports the Arrau odyssey of early triumphs as a child prodigy, his youth and studies in Berlin between the wars, the collapse of his first fame and the struggle to achieve ultimate recognition and maturity all by himself. The book reads like an enthralling Grimm's fairytale.







# Pianist Claudio Arrau Returns

BY DANIEL CARIAGA

Times Staff Writer

As long as one can remember, Claudio Arrau has seemed a pianist of contradictory attributes. At the keyboard he applies an abundance of imagination while adhering almost slavishly to the musical text. His stage manner—courty and self-effacing—disguises a fiery address to the scores he chooses to illuminate. He looks modest, even standoffish, yet his communication from the instrument often achieves a strong tie with his listeners.

At 76, an age he achieved two weeks ago, Arrau remains kaleidoscopic. A certain selflessness—a quality of detachment never associated with his more-or-less contemporaries, Artur Schnabel and Rudolf Serkin—still characterizes the Chilean-born pianist's playing. As he demonstrated Tuesday night in a Los Angeles Philharmonic-sponsored recital in the Pavilion of the Music Center, this quality can still charm. And irritate.

## Style of Impersonality

In an age when "me" is the element most prized in every solo performance—and coincidentally, all the "me's" begin to resemble each other—Arrau's personal style remains a style of impersonality. He illuminates the music at hand, he makes beauties at the instrument, he utilizes a still-comprehensive technique in the service of cohesive, taut and compelling performances. But he does not flaunt himself. Sometimes he does not even reveal himself.

In two sonatas of Beethoven, the one in D, Opus 10, No. 3, and the "Appassionata," Arrau's objectivity reaped, as is customary, telling, fresh and noble performances. The listener had to become accustomed to the echoey acoustics of the Pavilion before aural credibility could assert itself—but such is the case at every piano recital held in this theater. In good form on this occasion, Arrau used restraint and impetuosity equally, achieving elegant but vibrant results. The first D-major Sonata was given its due in a sweeping but highly articulate reading, the quick movements clean but exciting, the great (maybe Beethoven's first great) slow movement dramatic and inexorable, the Menuetto exquisitely colored.

## Fascinating Insights

Arrau's "Appassionata" this time around proved to be one of maturity and reflection rather than of youth and heat. For Arrau, this may have been a passing mood, but it garnered fascinating insights. Tempos were not slow, but climactic points became places of thought rather than of action. The four, *fortissimo* chords that lead into the coda of the first movement, for example, were resigned instead of defiant. The slow movement dealt in numbness rather than in generalized optimism, for once. The finale, though acceptably quick, was basically contemplative.

In the second half of this evening, Arrau turned to music

revealed, as it has under Arrau's hands on previous occasions, in liquid tone, pertinent nuances and reassuring fluency. Liszt's B-minor Ballade and "Les Jeux d'Eaux à la Villa d'Este" were delivered lightly, without strain, but also without strong characterization. Chopin's A-flat Ballade (a last-minute change from the original program) emerged curiously bland and dutiful; conversely, the closing piece, the B-minor Scherzo, became impassioned.

By then, the pianist showed signs of fatigue, portions of his audience had already deserted, and 11 o'clock was fast approaching. Arrau greeted a friendly standing ovation with no encores.







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## CLAUDIO ARRAU

### Long Biography

Claudio Arrau, renowned throughout the world as one of the supreme keyboard masters of the century, stands foremost, today, at the height of his long and legendary career, for the one artistic goal he has pursued for a lifetime: the total fusion of virtuosity and meaning.

Where other famous pianists play the piano for excitement, power or display, Arrau plays to probe, to divine, to interpret. Says Arrau, "An interpreter must give his blood to the work interpreted."

The famed late doyen of London music critics, Sir Neville Cardus of The Guardian, explained Arrau vividly:

"Arrau is the complete pianist. He can revel in the keyboard for its own pianistic sake, representing to us the instrument's range and power, but he can also go beyond piano playing as we are led by his art to the secret chambers of the creative imagination."

In a tribute by the Berlin Philharmonic, which bestowed the Hans von Bulow Medal on Arrau in 1980, on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of his debut with that great orchestra, it was put even better:

"When Arrau bends over the keyboard, it is as if Music and only Music itself, is flowing out of his entire body. There is not a nuance of feeling or sound that he has not mastered. His pianissimo is more eloquent, more mysterious than that of others, and his fortissimo has more depth of dimension and is more limitless."

But a London Sunday Times interview some years back, explained the Arrau mystique best of all:

"One regards him as a sort of miracle; the piano is the most machine-like of instruments except the organ - all those rods, levers, little felt pads, wires, no intimate subtle human connection with it by breath, tongueing, or the string player's direct engagement with speaking vibrations. But Arrau makes it live, like God teaching Adam on Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel roof; liquid, mysterious, profound, alive."



At 79, Arrau today, is a legend in his own lifetime, not only for the penetrating profundity of his interpretations, but for a transcendent virtuosity completely at the service of his art. Explains Arrau:

"Since in music we deal with notes, not words, with chords, with transitions, with color and expression, the musical meaning - always based on those notes as written and nothing else - has to be divined. Therefore any musician, no matter how great an instrumentalist, who is not also an interpreter of a divinatory order, the way Furtwangler was, is somehow onesided, somehow without spiritual grandeur."

Arrau is definitely not onesided or without spiritual grandeur. Having won particular fame as a great Beethoven interpreter, he is no less celebrated for his Schumann, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt and Debussy. Among the famed peers of his generation, it is a range without equal.

As a Beethoven interpreter, Arrau has played cycles of the sonatas and concertos throughout the world probably more times than any pianist in history. During the Beethoven Bicentennial Year, he played the five piano concertos in London for the fifth time around and the Emperor Concerto in New York, London, Berlin, at the Casals Festival, at the Bonn Festival and Beethoven recitals everywhere, including New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam and Zurich. He has played cycles of the complete 32 Piano Sonatas in New York, London, Buenos Aires, Berlin, Mexico City and most of the sonatas in Zurich, Paris and Hamburg.

The Arrau discography is now as vast as his repertoire. His recordings include the 32 Beethoven Piano Sonatas, the five Beethoven Piano Concertos (twice), the two Brahms Concertos (twice) and the complete works for piano and orchestra by Chopin - all on Philips Records and released throughout the world. He has also recorded a great many of the solo works of Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy, Schubert and Liszt, including the awesome 12 Etudes d'Execution Transcendente, a feat which he pulled off in time for his 75th birthday celebrations. Since then, he has recorded the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Boston Symphony under Sir Colin Davis, the Liszt Concertos and for the fourth time around, the Grieg and Schumann Concertos, also with the Boston Symphony under Sir Colin.



In 1978, Arrau completed a new Urtext Edition of the Beethoven Piano Sonatas for the famous music publishing house of Peters in Frankfurt. A performing edition, the first by a famous Beethoven interpreter since Schnabel's in 1935, it includes all the Arrau fingerings as well as tempi by Beethoven (where available), Czerny and Arrau and suggestions for dynamics, pedalings and performance practice.

Arrau was born in Chillan, Chile, on February 6, 1903 and like most of history's great pianists, was a child prodigy. His mother was an amateur pianist and his father, an eye doctor who died in a riding accident when Arrau was one year old. In order to support herself and her three young children, Lucretia Arrau, an indomitable woman, began to give piano lessons. Claudio, her youngest, was allowed to sit in so she could keep an eye on him and the result was that he could read notes before he could read words. By five, the boy gave recitals both in Chillan and in Santiago and by seven, he and his entire family, including an aunt, were on their way to Berlin (the musical Mecca of that time) where the young piano genius was to study on a Government grant (by an Act of the Chilean Congress) over the next ten years.

In Berlin, after blundering around for two years with the wrong teachers, Arrau, at ten, finally found the teacher he needed. He was Martin Krause, a pupil of Liszt, a famous music critic and the friend of all the great musicians of his time. Between the young boy and the grand pedagogue, it was love at first sight. For Arrau, Krause became the father he never had and to Krause, Arrau was the pupil he had been searching for. "He will be my masterwork," said Krause.

In Berlin, the young boy heard all the great pianists of the day; Teresa Carreno, d'Albert and later on, Busoni, and they all became his idols, especially Carreno and Busoni. When Krause died from the great Flu epidemic of 1918, Arrau, at 15, was left without a teacher. But so much had been imparted to him, that he preferred to go on by himself, winning the famed Liszt Prize twice in a row at age 16 and 17.

Thus, when Arrau, at 20, arrived for his Carnegie Hall debut on October 20, 1923, he was already a seasoned artist who had played throughout Europe since the age of 11, had appeared with Nikisch in Leipzig at 12, and at 17, had made smash debuts both in London (at the Royal Albert Hall) and in Berlin with the Berlin Philharmonic under Karl Muck.



Arrau had come to the United States for a promised tour of 30 dates and found himself only with five (in those days things like that had happened even to veterans like Carreno and Busoni); three concerts in New York and appearances with the Boston and Chicago Symphonies. Boston under Monteux and Chicago under Stock were splendid. Carnegie Hall, with the house mostly empty, far less so. Arrau, thinking himself a failure, returned home to Berlin, no richer than he had come, and that he says today, was probably the best thing that could have happened to him at that time, artistically-wise.

Berlin, after World War I, was boiling over with new ideas. The time of the salon pianists was about over, musicology was a new discipline and great Beethoven interpreters were coming to the fore who were to transform the art of piano playing in our time. The spirit of Busoni and Ansorge were still everywhere, Schnabel and Fischer were on the rise, and both freedom of expression and fidelity to the text were the order of the day.

Without giving up Liszt, Arrau gravitated to Beethoven. Textual fidelity and freedom of expression became his two guiding principles. In starving Germany, he managed to keep himself and his family alive, and by the time he won the famed International Geneva Prize in 1927, when he was 24 (the judges were Cortot, de Motta and Arthur Rubinstein), the great composers - Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, had become his life. By the time Arrau was 32, he had not only played the 32 Beethoven sonatas and all the Schubert and Mozart Sonatas as well as Weber in cycles of concerts, but also, all of the keyboard works of Bach in a series of 12 recitals which made him a legend in Berlin.

During all that time, he was also playing Schumann, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, Albeniz, Ravel and Schoenberg, leading the chief music critic of the London Times, William Mann to write years later after World War II, "There are pianists who rank as outstanding in Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt. Arrau is the only pianist alive who, at any rate while he is playing, can convince people that he is the outstanding interpreter of all these composers and a good many others too."



By the time Arrau returned to play at Carnegie Hall again, in February 1941, he felt ready and mature, and this time, his name had preceded him and the house was packed. The New York Times along with every other paper including Time, gave him rave reviews and the following season he played over 100 concerts across the U.S. and Canada and had the additional distinction of being invited back to play twice in that same season with both the Boston and Chicago Symphony Orchestras.

Today, Arrau's schedule of concerts still cover two and three continents and sometimes even more, as it did in 1968 when his world tour included the Soviet Union, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, as well as Europe, Israel, the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America - a tour which he repeated for the most part in 1974/75. In fact, with the exception of Peking, there is probably not an important city anywhere in the world, where Arrau has not been heard. During the 1981/82 season, in addition to the U.S., Canada, Europe and Brazil, he also made his fifth return to Japan.

Playing until even recently up to 100 concerts each season, Arrau has now reduced the number to around 70, leaving himself more time to record, study and read, a life-long passion. His fervent wish: "Another hundred years just to read."

Since 1941, Arrau and his wife Ruth, have made Douglaston, New York their home base and more recently, also a summer home in Vermont, where they love to retreat for rest and quiet, sometimes with their children and grandchildren and always with their beloved cats and dogs. With Mrs. Arrau and the children all Americans, Arrau followed suit and became an American citizen himself in February, 1979.

\* \* \* \* \*

April, 1982. Please destroy all previously dated materials.



## CLAUDIO ARRAU

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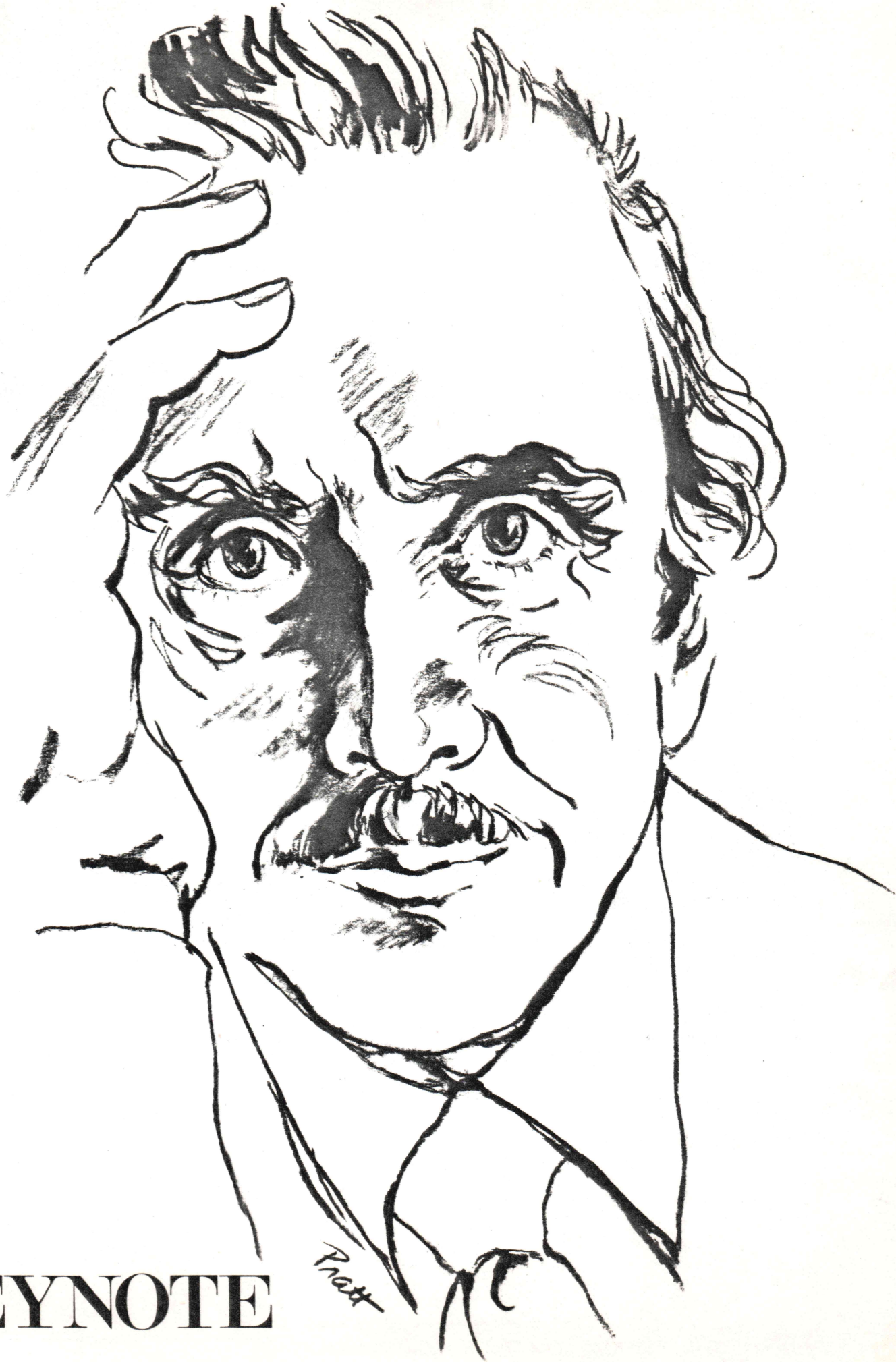
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(contains all releases through June, 1982)

Philips is releasing "The Claudio Arrau Edition" of 59 records which will include remastering and repackaging of all Beethoven Sonatas, all Beethoven Concertos, all Brahms Concertos, plus works of Chopin, Liszt and Schumann in 12 box sets.





**KEYNOTE**

# Claudio Arrau at 75

By Stephen Cera  
Illustrations by Doris Jeanne Pratt

Claudio Arrau celebrates his 75th birthday on February 6. It's a good time to look back at the career of one of the greatest, and most controversial, living pianists.

Of course, Arrau himself isn't looking back. He is currently in the midst of his 60th anniversary concert season, which will include over a hundred concert engagements plus intensive rounds of recording activity, teaching, and editing of piano music. The variety of the activity, and the pace, are typical of Arrau, who shows no sign of slowing down.

## A VANISHING BREED

As an artist, Arrau exemplifies a vanishing breed among concert pianists. He is a thinker, a philosopher, a poet, a

soul-searcher, diametrically opposed to the hordes of exhibitionistic virtuosos who clutter the piano scene. Arrau has spent a lifetime performing, studying, and rethinking the masterpieces of the piano literature. His appeal has always been to music lovers who value thoughtfulness over surface brilliance.

How does he maintain the pace, which could tire someone half his age? The pianist shrugged his shoulders when the question was put to him at his Long Island home. There seems to be no time to think about rest or inactivity. The piano always beckons. It was so even when Arrau was a young boy. "They couldn't tear me away from the instrument, even for meals. They used to force food into my mouth as I sat at the piano." Obviously, this was no ordinary child. Arrau emerged as a prodigy in his native Chile at four, and played his first recital at five: Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin Etudes. The Chilean govern-

ment, with unusual farsightedness, offered the boy a ten-year scholarship to study in Berlin. The award enabled him to work with Martin Krause, one of the last pupils of Franz Liszt.

Today, Arrau is noted for his interpretations of Liszt's music. This isn't coincidence: the link with the Liszt tradition is real, and Arrau may be its last living exponent. Krause filled the boy's



# Claudio Arrau



ears with descriptions of Liszt's playing, and those descriptions remain vivid to this day.

## A MUSICAL FAMILY TREE

Arrau is fond of retracing his musical genealogy, pointing out that just as Krause studied with Liszt, Liszt studied with Carl Czerny, and Czerny with Beethoven. Smiling, he relishes the thought that he can be considered a "musical great-great-grandson" of Beethoven.

Krause turned out to be Arrau's only serious teacher, and his most important musical influence. His progress during their five concentrated years together must have been extraordinary; Arrau was to have no other teacher. How was so much progress possible? "I had a lesson with Krause every day. He supervised my practicing. I even practiced in a special room in his apartment. He developed not

only my talent, but my entire personality. He took charge of my reading, my general culture. He occupied himself with everything to do with me."

Krause's death, when Arrau was only fifteen, was a grievous blow. Some problems arose; periods of intense self-doubt. Arrau turned to close friends for support and encouragement, and received it. He hasn't looked back since. Extensive concert activity came quickly, including Berlin Philharmonic and London debuts at 17. (Arrau played the Schubert-Liszt "Wanderer" Fantasy at his Berlin Philharmonic debut, with Muck conducting, and introduced himself to London audiences with Bach's "Goldberg" Variations.) Between 1914 and 1920, Arrau appeared with the leading orchestras of Germany, performing under the batons of Nikisch, Mengelberg, and Furtwangler.

The young pianist wasn't just giving concerts during this period, he was also attending them. Performances by Bu-



soni, Carreno, and D'Albert made powerful impressions. Arrau remembers going to hear Nikisch conduct the Berlin Philharmonic on Sunday mornings. (He later collaborated with Nikisch in the Liszt E-Flat Concerto.) He also heard a great deal of opera.



## BUILDING A REPERTOIRE

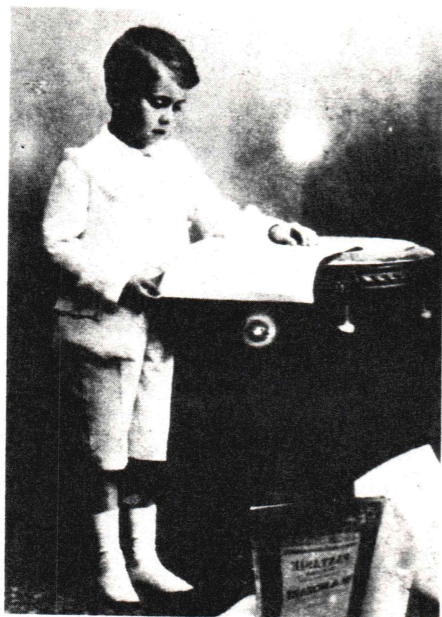
Meanwhile, Arrau was busy building a vast repertoire, ranging from Bach to the moderns of the day—Ravel, Prokofiev, Schoenberg. He performed music with which he's scarcely identified today: Balakirev's "Islamey," Strauss' "Blue Danube." Arrau recalls that "I played Schoenberg in the Twenties, when it was really risky." (Some think it still is.)

The astounding breadth of Arrau's repertoire prompts the question of whether it was always so extensive. Did he play virtually all the piano music of all the major composers as a youth? "Yes. I was never lazy. I was interested in getting to know all the output of all the great composers, to know each one's musical language." He studied Mozart's operas as preparation for the piano concerti, and Beethoven's symphonies and quartets as a complement to the piano sonatas.

Many consider Arrau to be today's foremost interpreter of the great Austro-German piano literature, ranging from Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven through Schubert, Brahms and Schoenberg. The scope of this literature makes it a suitable subject for lifelong study, which Arrau has done. How did it happen that this ardently expressive South American youth grew into such a classical master? Much of the credit must go to the early training in Germany, and exposure to the cultural climate. Post World War I Germany was a hotbed of artistic and intellectual ferment.



# Claudio Arrau





Musicology was a new form of scholarship, and great pianists who combined freedom of expression with fidelity to the composer's text were coming onto the scene. In this regard, Arrau mentions Busoni, Ansgorge, and Schabel as three of the strongest influences on him, particularly in Beethoven interpretation.

### A SPECIAL INSPIRATION

With this kind of inspiration, Arrau immersed himself in the Austro-German literature, and undertook complete cycles of Bach (the complete keyboard works in twelve Berlin recitals), Mozart (complete

keyboard works in five Berlin recitals) Schubert, and even Weber. Plus, of course, the cycle of thirty-two Beethoven sonatas.

Of all these composers, it is Beethoven who has most consistently preoccupied Arrau over the years. His approach to Beethoven, while undoubtedly influenced by the models to whom he refers, sounds thoroughly self-generated. He combines an intensely expressive approach to rhythm and harmony with rigorous intellectual control, based on strict adherence to the text. "First the text, then the flight of inspiration," is an Arrau credo. He claims to be "absolutely a fanatic" about textual fidelity. Following the score while listening to an Arrau rendition of a Beethoven sonata confirms this.

Some listeners feel that Arrau goes overboard in the direction of subjective expression. They accuse him of "point-

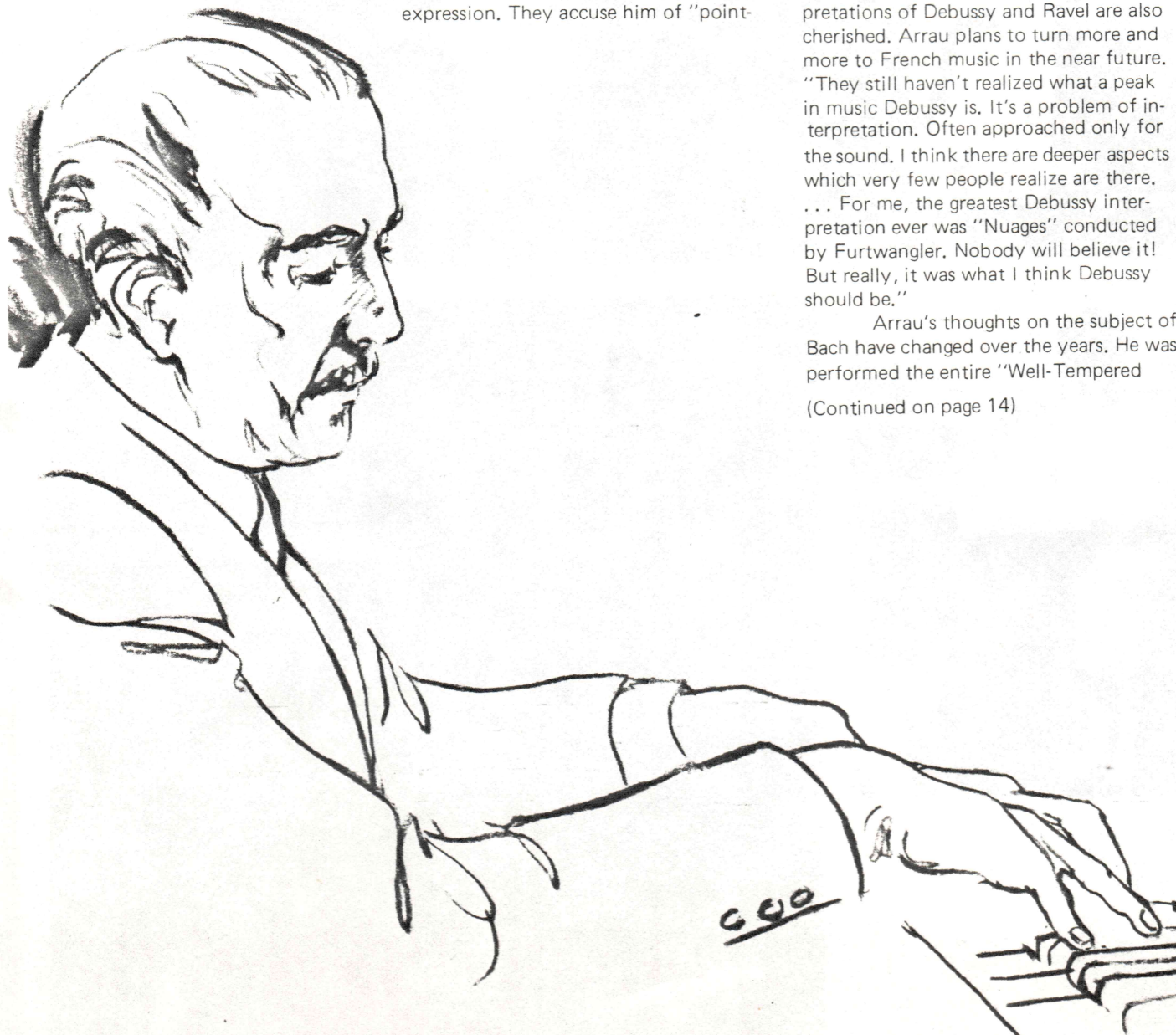
making," of over-emphasizing certain details for expressive effect. Often these accusations are made without consulting the score. When the score is studied, Arrau is usually borne out: his "points" have been there all along.

### NOT SIMPLY A SPECIALIST

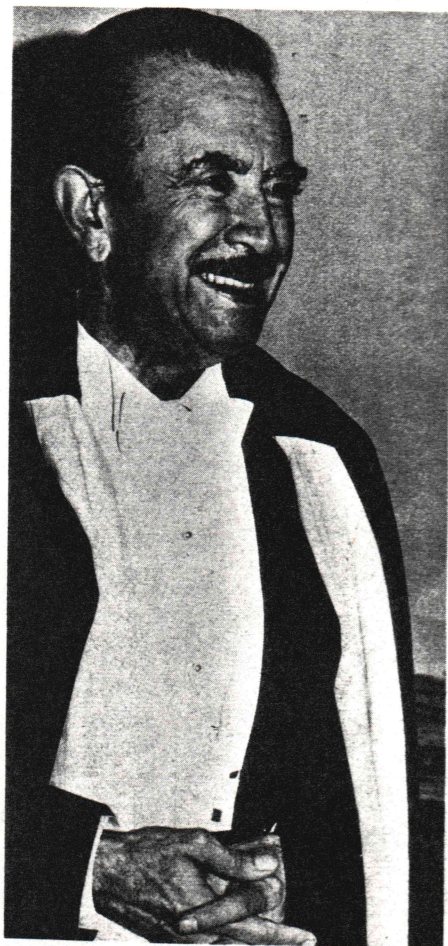
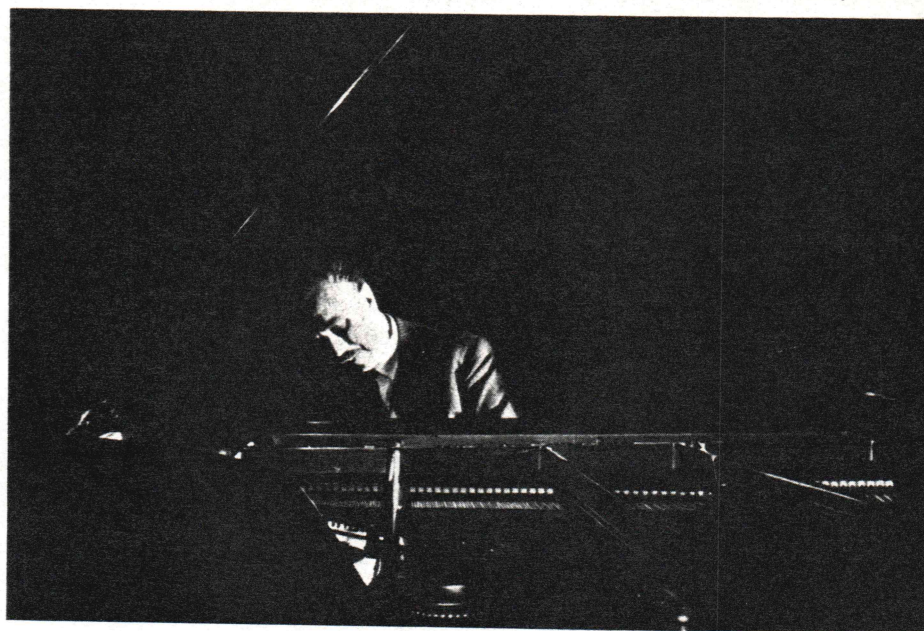
Most pianists who specialize in the Austro-German literature confine themselves to it, and with good reason, considering the size of this repertoire. Arrau is an exception. His musical appetite is all-embracing. Almost uniquely, he has branched out to encompass other styles, other composers. Many consider him a Chopin player virtually without peer. His recent recording of the "Preludes" proved a revelation to some who had typecast Arrau as a Beethoven specialist. His interpretations of Debussy and Ravel are also cherished. Arrau plans to turn more and more to French music in the near future. "They still haven't realized what a peak in music Debussy is. It's a problem of interpretation. Often approached only for the sound. I think there are deeper aspects which very few people realize are there. . . . For me, the greatest Debussy interpretation ever was "Nuages" conducted by Furtwangler. Nobody will believe it! But really, it was what I think Debussy should be."

Arrau's thoughts on the subject of Bach have changed over the years. He was performed the entire "Well-Tempered

(Continued on page 14)







#### AN ARRAU GALLERY

Opposite page, top: Martin Krause, Arrau's teacher, and a pupil of Franz Liszt, is third from left in this 1911 photo.

Far left: Arrau at five, when he gave his first Liszt recital in Santiago.

Left: In Carnegie Hall, 1952.

This page, top left: Arrau at the age of two, with his sister Lucretia.

Top right: Carnegie Hall, 1952.

Middle, left: Arrau as he appeared in London two years ago.

Middle, right: Arrau with his wife during his return to Warsaw in 1967

Bottom: Arrau at home in New York, 1974.

(Photo: Eugene Cook)





Klavier," both books, in public at the age of fourteen. Eighteen years later came the famous cycle of the complete keyboard works in twelve recitals. Since then, Arrau has come to the view that Bach shouldn't be played on the piano. He feels that a modern concert grand imparts a sound and character foreign to the music. He's content to leave Bach to the harpsichordists.

## SOME RUSSIAN SURPRISES

Russian music is an area one scarcely associates with Arrau, but the pianist praises Mussorgsky, Balakirev (his "Islamey" was included on Arrau's first piano rolls for the Aeolian Duo Art series), Prokofiev, and Scriabin. The line is drawn at Rachmaninoff. "I don't like Rachmaninoff, and I don't understand this craze for him. I think the Second Concerto is just a mountain of notes. There's one very pretty melody in the beginning, which is an old folk song . . ."

"Mountains of notes" never seem to have posed a problem for Arrau. His new recording of Liszt's "Transcendental Etudes" offers a staggering demonstration of pianistic command, all the more remark-



# Claudio Arrau

able from a pianist in his seventies. Arrau's virtuosity was apparent from the start, and he could have capitalized exclusively on it. But he chose not to do so, even in the most virtuosic piano music, such as Liszt and Chopin Etudes. Apparently, technical difficulties just never arose, even in this repertoire. "I was allowed to play naturally, like an animal jumps. I had a natural sense of movement. If I encountered unforeseen difficulties, I found movements which solved them." It sounds so simple.

Claudio Arrau commands one of the richest, most plangent sonorities around, equally well suited to Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, and Ravel. He pedals with acute sensitivity to tonal shading, and voices chords with uncanny accuracy. The British critic, Neville Cardus, put it this way: "The fingers of Arrau seem always to have brains in them."

## CONSTANT EXPLORATION

Many artists at seventy-five are content to rest on their laurels, to keep playing the pieces that have brought them success over the years. Arrau is different. He continues to explore the piano literature and to expand his repertoire. He's intent on resisting "tides of fashion," thus rationalizing the absence of Schubert from his programs in the last decade. He feels that too many pianists attempt to play Schubert, with little appreciation of how to approach the music. Arrau will return to Schubert in time. Likewise, he is unwilling to perform Scriabin at this time (although he used to), because the Russian composer has become a "fad."

An emphasis on French music will be next: more Debussy, more Ravel. Then it might be Schoenberg's turn. The Mozart concertos also beckon.

Even new music holds an interest. If Arrau attends a concert these days, it will likely as not be to hear a new work. He plays Ives at home, and speaks respectfully of piano music by Pierre Boulez and Elliott Carter.

Arrau continues to work on his edition of the Beethoven piano sonatas, being published by Peters. It will contain all of the Arrau fingerings, as well as his tempo, dynamic, and pedal markings, and suggestions for performance. It's the fruit of a lifetime of study, linked to six decades of performance experience. The edition will also complement his work as a teacher, to which he is strongly committed. Arrau's goal in teaching isn't to have his students parrot him; he wants to nurture



what is special in each individual, comparing his function as a teacher to the way a gardener plants. He feels challenged and renewed by this activity, describing it in ideal terms as an interplay of ideas.

## A CONFIRMED RECITALIST

Arrau doesn't fear for the future of the solo recital, and is unconvinced by arguments that audiences are dwindling, costs rising, and the repertoire remaining stubbornly stuck in traditional Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century molds. "One sees in so many places new audiences filling halls. Programs today are so much less aimed at simply pleasing the audience, winning it over. The level of recital programs has improved. We are even able today to give an entire Schubert recital!





What I don't approve of is this division of audiences between people who go to hear avant-garde music and will listen to nothing else, and people who go only up to Brahms. It's ridiculous."

The desire to break down barriers is characteristic of Arrau. His career has always reconciled opposites: Latin temperament with Austro-German musical tradition; mastery of the old with eagerness to understand what is new.

After sixty years of public performance, Arrau speaks candidly about it: "Of course one gets nervous in front of an audience. Their reaction will influence you. If you feel they are with you, then you give everything you have. But one must also develop a certain independence. One must never try simply to please." It's a characteristic refrain: the disdain for showy display, for cheap thrills and easy success. Music isn't entertainment, or a circus where the performer parades himself. The interpreter "must give his blood to the work interpreted . . . I have established a way of thinking all my life. To be independent of everything: piano, acoustic, applause and no applause. To be influenced by only one thing: music."



ARRAU notes 28 oct 82, on phone to douglaston, n.y.

- 1) what you you read recently that you would like to recommend?

let me see. "Garp" fascinating. bio of Chabrier by Oromayas (in English) the musicologist. very interesting. Chabrier renaissance now in france, sort of renaissance. about space, and autonomy, and quantum theory.

- 2) during your lifetime, many composers have been resurrected, or returned from neglect-- Clementi, Schubert, Liszt? Is there another who should now be brought back?

the 19th century composer, Hermann Goetz, who wrote a concerto I used to play. he died rather young. a contemporary of R. Schumann wrote an opera taming of the shrew, which has been revived in several opera houses in germany recently

then henselt, beautiful concerto, two collections of etudes, opus 2 and opus 5-- really concert etudes like the liszt etudes

- 3) if you could guide a young pianist from an early age, what would you require?

mainly, two things. first, not stay a specialist of instrument become an all-around musician: play chamber music, go to the opera. general culture extremely important. not to specialize in music but become an artist. careful of vanity. vanity the great danger in vedelopment of young artist. --not to do things just to please audience. not for his own success, nothing just for success. one has to fight all one's life against vanity. yes-- advise to stay weeks off completely the instrument. musicals and theater.

- 4) what drives you?

come as close as possible to doing good performances. can't imagine anyone feeling like withdrawing or retiring. all the great pianists I heard in my youth played to an old age.

- 5) pianists under 40, from whom do you expect the most?

danny barenboim-- a wonderful artist, wonderful attitude. the young krystian zimerman. garrick ohlsson.



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The young Kravtsov, Zimerman. Garrick Ohlsson.



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JAMES MURTHA

BERNARD GURTMAN

## CLAUDIO ARRAU EDITION OF BEETHOVEN PIANO SONATAS FOR PETERS PUBLISHED

Claudio Arrau's new edition of the 32 Beethoven Piano Sonatas published in 2 volumes by Edition Peters, in Frankfurt, London, and New York, is now available in music shops all over the world.

A performing Urtext Edition, like the Schnabel published in 1935, the Arrau, the third for the house of Peters in more than 100 years, is based on original and early editions as well as Beethoven autographs. In addition to fingerings, dynamics, and pedalings by the editor as well as all the latest musicological findings, all original Beethoven markings (wherever available) are included. The Arrau edition also, unlike the Schnabel, does not break the flow of the printed page with footnotes, leaving performance suggestions to an Appendix at the back. Metronome markings for all movements are also indicated at the back; by Beethoven (where available), by Czerny and by the editor.

From the time the piano sonatas were first printed in Beethoven's lifetime and after, there have been many complete editions of the great and inexhaustible 32 by famed Beethoven interpreters, notably Liszt, Bulow, d'Albert, and Schnabel, among others. The Arrau adds to these, thus bringing a century and a half of accumulated knowledge, research, thought, culture, and art to a new synthesis. And thanks to modern research and rethinking, as well as recent findings, the Arrau Urtext may very well turn out to be the most accurate urtext to date,



even more so than the recent Henle Edition.

Explains Arrau: "Henle sometimes considers a bowing that is different the second time, to be a neglect of Beethoven's, correcting it to make it more logical. I don't agree, and I have had arguments with the Henle editors about it. Beethoven had the freedom of the creative giant he was, and suddenly he changes a bowing. Of course. Why would he want it the same every time? Peters editors and I have had arguments about every little staccato mark. I have kept the dynamic markings very strict. I have added my own only where there are none or where it is necessary for interpretative or performance reasons. I suggest my own markings too where there are stretches with no signs as to whether to play legato or staccato. All my suggestions are in brackets."

A problem which arose with Op. 106 did not detain Arrau. His publishers brought to his attention a new edition of the sonata published in East Germany (by Edition Peters there) in which the second Scherzo movement is transposed in order with the third slow movement on the ground that Beethoven himself accepted this order for the first London edition. Arrau explains that this is an old story to which he does not subscribe, and for good musical reasons. The raging, colossal Fugue makes sense, according to Arrau, only after the sublime slow movement (twenty minutes long), not to mention the fabulous transition from that movement to the Fugue which exists and which otherwise would have to be discarded.



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To be published soon, also by Peters, will be a small book by Arrau dealing with detailed performance suggestions and his ideas on the interpretation of the 32 sonatas.

-oOo-

November, 1978



# THE SUN

Thursday, November 3, 1977

By STEPHEN CERA

## Claudio Arrau: far beyond technique

At 74, the eminent pianist Claudio Arrau isn't looking back on his brilliant career as a concert soloist. It would be unlike Arrau to dwell on the past.

Embarking on his 60th anniversary season, with appearances last night and tonight with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Arrau shows little sign of tiring.

He looks forward to more than 100 concert engagements in the coming season, plus an intensive round of recording activity, teaching, and editing of piano music. The variety of the activity, and the pace, are typical of Arrau.

As an artist, he exemplifies a vanishing-breed among concert pianists. Arrau is a thinker, a philosopher, a poet, a soul-searcher, diametrically opposed to the hordes of exhibitionistic virtuosos who clutter the piano scene. Mere technical display is anathema to him, one who has spent a lifetime performing, studying, and rethinking the masterpieces of the piano literature.

How does he maintain the pace, which could tire someone half his age? The pianist shrugged his shoulders when the question was put to him at his Long Island home. There seems to be no time to think about rest or inactivity. The piano always beckons.

It was so even when Arrau was a young boy. "They couldn't tear me away from the instrument, even for meals. They used to force food into my mouth as I sat at the piano."

Obviously, this was no ordinary child. Arrau emerged as a prodigy in his native Chile at the age of 4. The Chilean government, with unusual farsightedness, recognized the exceptional talent, and offered the boy a 10-year scholarship to study in Berlin. The award enabled him to work with Martin Krause, one of the last pupils

of the legendary Franz Liszt.

Today, Arrau is especially noted for his interpretations of Liszt's music. This isn't coincidence, the link with the Liszt tradition is real. Arrau is fond of retracing his musical genealogy, pointing out that just as Krause studied with Liszt, Liszt studied with Carl Czerny, and Czerny with Beethoven. Smiling, the pianist relishes the thought that he can be considered a "musical great-great-grandson" of Beethoven.

Krause turned out to be Arrau's only serious teacher, an "his most important musical influence. His progress during those early years in Berlin must have been extraordinary, in that Arrau was to have no other teacher."

"How was such progress possible?" "I had a lesson with Krause every day. He supervised my practicing. I even practiced in a special room in his apartment. He developed not only my talent, but my entire personality. He took charge of my reading, my general culture. He occupied himself with everything to do with me."

Krause's death, when Arrau was only 15, was a grievous blow. Some problems arose, periods of intense self-doubt. Arrau turned to close friends for support and encouragement, and received it. He hasn't looked back since. Extensive concert activity came quickly. Berlin Philharmonic and London debuts at 17, and solo recital engagements elsewhere.

Meanwhile, he was busy building up a vast repertoire, ranging from Bach to the moderns of the day, Ravel, Prokofiev, Schoenberg.

How did he find time to learn all this music? "I was never lazy. I was interested in getting to know all the output of all the great composers, to know each one's musical language." Many consider Arrau today's foremost interpreter of the great

Austro-German piano literature, which ranges from Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven through Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Schoenberg. The extent of this literature makes it a fit subject for lifelong study, which Arrau has done.

But he has branched out to embrace other styles, other composers. Many consider him a Chopin player virtually without peer. His interpretations of the French masters, Debussy and Ravel, are cherished. Arrau plans to turn more and more to French music in the near future. "They still haven't realized what a peak in music Debussy is. It's a problem of interpretation—too much appreciated only for the sound. I think there are deeper aspects involved, spiritual aspects which very few people realize are there. . . . For me, the greatest Debussy interpretation ever was 'Images' conducted by Furtwaengler. Nobody will believe it! But really, there was what Debussy should be."

And what of Bach? Arrau's thoughts on the subject have changed over the years. He was performing the entire "Well-Tempered Clavier" in public at the age of 14. In 1935, he played the complete keyboard works of Bach in a series of 12 recitals. Since then, he has come to feel that Bach shouldn't be played on the piano, that the throned concert grand imparts a sound and character to the music that is foreign to it. He's content to leave Bach to the harpsichordists.

After 60 years of public performance, Arrau speaks frankly about it. "Of course, one gets nervous in front of an audience. Their reaction will influence you. If you feel they are with you, then you give everything you have. But one must also develop a certain independence. One must never try simply to please." It's a characteristic refrain: the disdain for showy display, for cheap thrills and easy success.

Did technical problems ever arise, even in Liszt or Chopin Etudes? Apparently not. "I was allowed to play naturally, like an animal jumps. I had a natural sense of movement. If I encountered unforeseen difficulties, I found movements which solved them." It sounds so simple.

He's intent on resisting "fides of fashion," thus rationalizing the absence of Schubert sonatas from his programs in the past decade, and an unwillingness to perform Scriabin nowadays (though he used to, and admires the Russian composer). An emphasis on French music will come next. Then it might be Schoenberg's turn ("I played Schoenberg in the '20's when it was really risky.") The Mozart concertos beckon. Even new music holds an interest. If Arrau attends a concert these days, it will likely as not be to hear a new work. He plays Ives at home, and speaks respectfully of piano music by Pierre Boulez and Elliott Carter.

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Claudio Arrau

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## Newsweek

February 20, 1978

### Iron Man

Few pianists have played as energetically for so long as Claudio Arrau. For 70 of his 75 years, the Chilean-born maestro has been performing before the public. Only recently has he reduced his output to a hundred concerts a year, and he seldom contemplates a sabbatical: "I'm afraid if I stop I won't have the courage to start again." Work is a drug that Arrau cannot live without. Starting in the '30s, he engaged in a series of marathon exploits, playing all of Bach's solo works for the clavier and, later on, performing the same kind of intensive, almost nonstop, exploration of Mozart, Schubert, Liszt and Beethoven piano works.

**Fierce Aplomb:** The massive program he played last week for his 75th birthday celebration in New York—Beethoven's Sonata No. 26 in E flat major ("Les Adieux"), Liszt's giant B Minor Sonata and the exuberant Brahms Sonata No. 3 in F minor—was no less challenging. He attacked the pieces in typical Arrau fashion: with fierce aplomb and with scrupulous respect for the notes as written. He is about as far removed as possible from the romantic approach of a Horowitz. Arrau does not indulge in personality, take liberties with the score or yield to the temptations of emotional abandon.

He is also legendary for his anxiety before a concert. He welcomes it. "If you think that going out on stage is like going for a walk," he says, "your playing will lack intensity. Of course if there's too much anxiety you're paralyzed. Go see a psychiatrist." But during last week's program, Arrau's fingers moved with easy eloquence, seemingly without a care in the world. There is great contrast between him and Rudolf Serkin, no less an intellectual pianist but one whose confrontations with the instrument often seem a matter of life or death.

**Sparkling Clarity:** In both the Beethoven and the Liszt, Arrau began at a stately pace. He was perhaps a shade too reverent in the Beethoven, a shade too somber in the Brahms. Rarely did he permit himself the romantic luxury of letting go. But everything

marched with sparkling clarity—within carefully preserved limitations. He is a thinking man's pianist, and in all three works he seemed to be preoccupied with architecture. In the Beethoven, whose three movements are so wide apart emotionally, he was at pains to give each statement its own distinct character, creating a live-theater illusion of time and space. In the Liszt he was brilliant in reconciling the work's emotional opposites, in harnessing all of its restless tensions. And throughout the five movements of the Brahms sonata, he was busy tightening all the nuts and bolts of the work's sprawling, amorphous structure. At the end of the program, a birthday cake arrived and Arrau still had plenty of breath left to blow out all the candles with one puff.

Claudio Arrau's prodigious talent was recognized early by his country. At the age of 7, this wunderkind, accompanied by his family, was sent by the Chilean Government to study in Berlin. He became a pupil of Martin Krause, who himself had been a student of Liszt. Young Arrau soon began to give public performances in Europe, entertaining kings and



Arrau and wife celebrating No. 75



queens who were amazed at this Mozart reincarnate. In 1913, Queen Marie of Romania gave him a necktie pin with a royal M and a crown of diamonds.

**Faithfulness:** Arrau recalls meeting or hearing such piano legends as Ferruccio Busoni, Teresa Carreño and Eugène d'Albert. He himself played with such conductors as Arthur Nikisch and Karl Muck. As he looks back, he acknowledges the influence of Wanda Landowska on his understanding of Bach, of Bruno Walter who illuminated Chopin, of Erich Kleiber who did the same for Schumann, and of Artur Schnabel, who "opened my eyes to faithfulness to the text as the basis of all interpretation."

But Arrau hardly dwells on the past. "One advantage of age is you don't have to appease the public," he says. "Young pianists try too hard to please, to make a success." For the young performer, he recommends psychoanalysis, a remedy he has espoused all his life, the way doctors used to prescribe castor oil. "Now I can pretty much solve the problems for myself. That's another advantage of age. Experience gets rid of the superfluous. I think I play now in a more natural and spontaneous way. Your personality gets more integrated." Seven decades after he began, Arrau's music making sounds deceptively easy. But it celebrates a hard-won victory—the integration of a personality with innate musical genius.

—HUBERT SAAL



CLAUDIO ARRAU

Program Biography

Claudio Arrau, throughout a long career spanning the continents, has consistently put a supreme keyboard mastery at the total service of his art, achieving fame not only as a celebrated interpreter of Beethoven, but also of Schumann, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt and Debussy. Today, world-renowned as one of the greatest pianists of the century, he has become a legend in his own lifetime.

Every season Arrau plays about 80 concerts in all the music centers of the world, often on three continents and sometimes even on four, as he did on a world tour in 1968, when he played not only in the United States, Europe and South America, but also Moscow, Leningrad and in Tokyo, Sydney, Melbourne and Tel Aviv, a tour which he repeated in 1974-75. During the 1981-82 season, in addition to his tours of the United States, Canada and Europe, he will also make a fifth return to Japan. Outside of Peking, there is not a major city in the world where Arrau has not been heard.

Equally renowned on records, Arrau has recorded the 32 Beethoven Piano Sonatas, the five Beethoven Piano Concerti (twice) and the complete Chopin works for piano and orchestra, as well as the two Brahms Concerti (twice) and a host of other works, including most recently the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No.1 with the Boston Symphony. Currently he is

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halfway through recording the complete piano works of Schumann on 16 LP's and most of the major works of Chopin and Liszt, all on Philips Records. His recording of the awesome Liszt Transcendental Etudes, released in honor of his 75th birthday celebrations throughout the world in 1978, was given the unqualified acclaim of critics everywhere. Writing in Gramophone, London Times music critic William Mann distilled the essence of this praise by stating: "On balance, Arrau offers far more than anyone now before the public. Monumentally grandiose as the Crown Jewels." Arrau also has completed a new edition of the Beethoven Piano Sonatas for Peters in Frankfurt.

Named in a Newsweek story with the handful of the world's greatest living pianists (together with Rubinstein, Horowitz, Richter and Serkin), Arrau, like most of history's legendary musicians, was a child prodigy. Born in Chillan, Chile, he gave his first recital at five in Santiago and at seven in Buenos Aires when he and his family were on their way to Berlin where the young Arrau was to study on a government grant (by an Act of Congress) over the next ten years.

In Berlin, Arrau studied with Martin Krause, a pupil of Liszt. He made his formal debut at 11, his Berlin Philharmonic and London debuts at 17, and at 16 and 17 pulled off the incredible feat of winning the famed Liszt Prize twice in a row, which up to then had not been awarded in 45 years. Arrau's world tours began at the age of 20 when he came to the United States for the first time in 1923. He made his



debut with the Boston Symphony under Monteux and the Chicago Symphony under Stock. Returning to Europe, he entered the International Geneva Concours for Pianists of 1927 and won First Prize. From that moment on, his international career began in earnest, including two tours of the Soviet Union in 1929 and 1930. When he returned again in 1968, his Moscow and Leningrad concerts sold out in two hours.

After winning the Geneva Prize, Arrau began playing his celebrated series of piano cycles in Berlin, which laid the cornerstone of his present-day acclaim in Germany. In 1935 he was the first pianist ever to play the complete keyboard works of Bach in 12 recitals, and in subsequent seasons, all of the Beethoven sonatas, the Mozart sonatas, Schubert and Weber. Arrau returned to the United States giving a sensational Carnegie Hall recital in February 1941 which set the final crown on his international fame. As a Beethoven interpreter, Arrau has played cycles of the 32 piano sonatas and five piano concerti probably more times than any pianist in history.

He continues to be one of the most sought-after, great-name artists in the world, appearing season after season in every music center and with the foremost orchestras everywhere. In April 1980, he celebrated the 60th Anniversary of his Berlin Philharmonic debut and was awarded the orchestra's highest honor--the Hans von Bulow Medal. During the 1981-82 season, he will make his 40th consecutive tour of the United States and Canada.

Arrau has made his home since 1941 in Douglaston, New York and more recently in Chester, Vermont, where he and his



wife Ruth love to retreat to their summer home (sometimes together with their three children and six grandchildren, four cats and three dogs) for rest and quiet and his favorite relaxations--weeding and reading.

JUNE 1981. Please destroy all previously dated materials.



# Claudio Arrau: A Quiet Legend Turns 75

By MANUELA HOELTERHOFF

"I have never experienced a minute of doubt that the reason for my being on this planet was to be a pianist," Claudio Arrau once said. And for 70 of his 75 years the peripatetic Chilean pianist has been trouping around the world playing, in particular, Liszt, Beethoven, Brahms and Schumann. His current annual tour takes him through America and Europe for some 96 concerts in 40 cities.

Nevertheless, Arrau's years before the public have not been free from upheaval. Three times his career almost disappeared: Once, when the child prodigy became bored at age eight; later when the 15-year-old travelling virtuoso was traumatized by the death of his teacher, Martin Krause; and again in the 1930s, when Arrau's Germany-based career was rerouted to America by Hitler's ascent. Always he regained control and, over the years, a steady kind of fame, not dependent on extravagant media attention. Retiring and without evident eccentricities, Arrau has become a quiet legend.

This past Monday, Arrau turned 75 and the day before, at three in the afternoon, celebrated his birthday with a recital at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. The event, part of the "Great Performers" series, was sold out, with surplus admirers surrounding the pianist on stage. For two hours Arrau's magnificent pianism transformed that enormous, gilded, cafeteria-like auditorium into a noble hall.

He chose composers closely associated with him: After Beethoven's "Les Adieux" Sonata, he launched into Liszt's towering B minor Sonata, a half-hour piece that he developed with an almost menacing intensity. Another technically strenuous piece, Brahms' sprawling Sonata No. 3 in F minor followed the intermission. Afterwards, much applause and some cheers, but nothing excessive. Nobody gets loud or maudlin at Arrau concerts.

Two days prior to the concert Arrau talked about his career at his home in Douglaston, Long Island, a pleasant-looking, hilly town with curious old houses about 25 minutes from Manhattan. The pianist has lived there with his wife, Ruth Schneider Arrau, since 1947. Tall firs crowd the white frame house overlooking Long Island Sound. Once past the gate, a narrow walk leads to the front entrance. A maid opens the door, followed by a very hairy gray cat, which is quickly shushed away. The visitor is deposited in a sunken, carpeted music room.

Memories and mementos seem to be everywhere—stacked and layered: At least 20 African carvings huddle together over the fireplace; pre-Columbian pottery crowds the bookcases; Russian icons cover one wall; another corner by the grand piano is devoted to Japanese prints. The telephone ring is muffled, the lighting muted. Time is not rushed here.

After perhaps five minutes Arrau comes

softly down the stairs, a small black-haired man nattily dressed in slightly flared slacks and a brown leather jacket. He looks a healthy 60.

He sits down, smiling slightly and proceeds to interview me. "Riga!" he exclaims when I tell him of my mother's Latvian birthplace, which hasn't been easily accessible for 30 years; Arrau last played there before World War II. "What a beautiful city. And the audience, so cultured and knowledgeable." He has been everywhere.

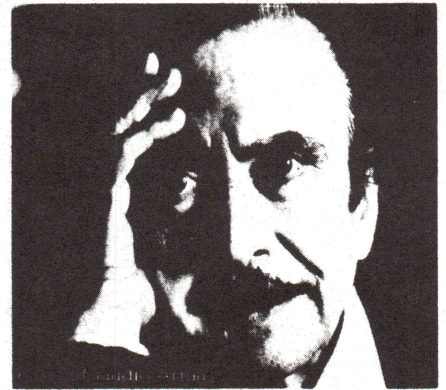
Arrau's memory is undimmed. With a little prodding he brings back his childhood in Chillan, Chile, and the day when he trotted up to his mother's piano, looked at the music and played a few Chopin preludes. He was five years old and had never had a lesson. "Somehow, suddenly I could read music," Arrau recalls, still slightly mystified by the process. A recital followed at Chillan's candle-lit hall. "I wasn't really nervous. It was late in the evening. In fact, I was falling asleep. But the candlelight—it remains a beautiful remembrance."

Arrau's mother (his father had died when he was a year old) took him to Berlin, where the unusual child, who had subconsciously established a line to composers of the past, became a pupil of the esteemed pedagogue Martin Krause. A better match would have been difficult. Krause had a direct physical link with the past. He was a pupil of Liszt, who studied with Czerny, who studied with Beethoven. The nine-year-old Arrau became, so to speak, the pianistic grandchild of Liszt.

Berlin, then a glittering metropolis racing toward doom, provided a stimulating, nurturing atmosphere. At 16 and 17, Arrau won the famed Liszt Prize twice in a row; it hadn't been awarded in 45 years. And in 1927 he added the then prestigious Geneva Prize. One of the judges was Artur Schnabel.

Arrau never took another teacher after Krause's death, but he did for a long time work out certain psychological blocks with the Jungian analyst Hubert Abrahamson. More introverted than outgoing, Arrau frequently found the prospect of public playing utterly paralyzing (he sometimes still does and cancels). With Abrahamson's guidance, Arrau began investigating his neurotic tensions. The idea, he recalls, was not to liberate him from his creative tensions—there has to be a certain chafing—but to prevent any debilitating neuroses from arising. In fact, Arrau thinks psychoanalysis is important for any performer "to really open up, to get rid of the blocks, to develop your creativity completely."

Perhaps because of this search for balance amidst emotional turmoil Arrau's interpretations are generally free from fussiness and eccentricity; he believes strongly in adhering to a composer's wishes and notations. And, not surprisingly, he doesn't cultivate any intriguingly strange habits. He wraps himself in a Romantic Era cape after a performance, but that is about it.



And unlike Vladimir Horowitz, two years his junior, he probably would not threaten to cancel a performance in Florida if fresh gray sole wasn't flown in from New York. Arrau gets his gustatory pleasures from salad, meats and yogurt. He likes to be hungry before a concert ("makes you alert"), and so he only has a cup of coffee.

Arrau's repertoire is huge. By now he has mastered all the Beethoven concertos and sonatas, Bach's keyboard works, all of Schumann, most of Chopin, Liszt and Schubert and large selections of Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky and Schoenberg. It's all stored in his head, for ready retrieval. "Even if I haven't played a work in 20 years," he emphasizes, "it's there; I can play it from memory."

Arrau, of course, isn't the only artist who has lived past 65 without dire consequences. Rubinstein, Stokowsky, Picasso and Casals all continued to do magnificent work once past the conventional prime years. Horowitz and conductor Karl Bohm still are. I asked whether this constant exercise of the mind helps keep artists from aging, while other senior citizens, deprived of challenges and active usefulness, sometimes start to doddle. "Well, I think any kind of effort is good. Taking new pieces, working on them every day, memorizing a bit—that keeps you to a certain extent from aging too much. And the continuing performing, the music going through you all the time, makes you react and keeps your sensitivity alert."

Rooted as he is in the past, Arrau has not shut out the present. John Cage's music is on a chair, a Stockhausen piece has already made it to the piano and sometime soon, Arrau wants to play one of the Boulez sonatas. Whenever he no longer feels challenged by a piece, he puts it aside for awhile. Right now Chopin's Sonata No. 3 is out of favor, but all of Schubert is in.

Somewhat surprisingly, at least for this listener, he finds Schubert's piano works probably the most difficult to interpret. "To catch the sadness, the melancholy without becoming sentimental, that is extremely difficult."

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# Vanity is the enemy, says Arrau

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*pianist no longer tries to please; he 'just lets it happen'*

BY ROBIN GREEN

DOUGLASSON, N.Y. — "Vanity is fatal," said Claudio Arrau. "So many artists get stuck through vanity because all they want is to please, not project the meaning of the music."

The celebrated Chilean-born pianist, who will give a recital at Massey Hall tomorrow, looked reflectively across the memorabilia-filled study of his modest home overlooking Long Island Sound, clearly struck by what he had just said.

"By long training," he continued, "I have managed to overcome vanity. This is important for any performer. In the beginning, when you are young, vanity can help a little by making you want to be very good; because you want to please, you work more. But later it can be counterproductive. You must learn to just let it happen."

Arrau has been playing the piano no more or less brilliantly for 73 of his 77 years and is currently on an eight-month concert tour of North America and Europe. During this time, he will also make five recordings in three countries and give any number of lessons to the many pupils he has in various climes around the globe.

Such a schedule would faze pianists years his junior. Arrau is concerned only that his manager recently ordered him to reduce the number of performances he gives annually from around 120 to 100. "I feel fit, I feel strong," he laughs, his brown-green eyes sparkling. "I mind very much if I don't have enough concerts."

Short, trim and deceptively frail-looking, he emerges from his regular afternoon nap for an interview dressed smartly in a grey tweed jacket, green open-neck shirt and dark slacks, his receding hair combed back sleekly. At the first question, his face breaks into a broad grin: What, he is asked, makes Claudio Arrau run?

"Vitamins," he exclaims. "I always take very good care of myself. I know it sounds awful, but I eat scientifically — no red meats or sweet things. I don't drink or smoke and I always get plenty of sleep, even when I travel. Also, I find it good to skip music for a day or two occasionally and do other things, such as going to museums or theatres."

But behind this jaunty and rather romantic exterior lies a complex personality that has undergone some wrenching experiences.

When Arrau was barely 4 years old, he had already taught himself to read music and was playing the piano with such proficiency that an astonished Chilean Congress voted the funds necessary to establish a 10-year scholarship to send him (with his mother and sister) to Berlin to study with the legendary Martin Krause. Krause, who had been a pupil of Franz Liszt, became like a father to Arrau, not only giving him two to three hours of lessons a day but coaching him in the everyday problems of a growing boy.

"Krause taught me marvellous things about playing the piano, but he was a spiritual guide, too, and left me with endless food for



Claudio Arrau will perform tomorrow night at Massey Hall.

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thought. Did you know that the charged fees only to people who had no talent, those who liked the idea simply of studying with him? Liszt never charged, either, nor do I. I have found, strangely enough, that most of the people with big talent have absolutely no money."

Krause died when Arrau was only 15 and already much acclaimed in European music circles. "It was a terrible period. For several years after Krause's death, I was sort of blocked psychologically — there were certain things I couldn't do, and I ran into difficulties technically and emotionally, so I decided to do something about it. At 21, I started consulting a psychoanalyst."

Arrau contends it was analysis that helped him overcome the sense of vanity that he believes has hindered the development of many child prodigies' careers. Whenever a young performer — particularly one of his own pupils — comes to him with problems that he perceives to be of the mind, his advice is always the same: "Go see a psychiatrist."

Analysis notwithstanding, he admits he still gets nervous before a performance. "But you know, this can be good; the moment you stop thinking about pleasing, it helps tremendously. And this idea of a performer wanting to be better than somebody else — that's ridiculous. Every good artist has his own message that can't be replaced by anyone else. That knowledge alone is enough to give one self-confidence."

Arrau is something of a contradictory figure. In private, he is a shy, scholarly man who tends to shun crowds, reads a great deal, edits important musical tomes and so mistrusts machines that he prefers to let his wife, Ruth, operate

the record player. In public, he is an adored artist who dazzles audiences worldwide with his almost flawless technique and staggering appetite for exploring the entire keyboard oeuvre of composers such as Bach, Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven, Liszt and, of course, Chopin.

"When I give a performance, I try to get to the core of the music, to understand the intentions of the composer. The musician is supposed to be a magician, to become what he is playing. It is true — my performances have become more intense, much more gripping. You develop a power to put a spell on the audience. When you are completely alert and awake in your subconscious, you have a much better projection on stage."

Arrau, who rarely listens to his own records, admits that making recordings is becoming increasingly important to him because "performances are soon forgotten, whereas records will always be there. Records are more like documents." But his eyes bulge with horror when he is asked if he has ever thought of giving up performing in public. "No, no," he protests. "I can't imagine it."

In Toronto, Arrau will play two Beethoven sonatas — Opus 10, No. 3 and the Appassionata; the first book of Debussy's Images; Liszt's Second Ballade and the Fountains in the Villa D'Este, and Chopin's Third Ballade and First Scherzo. Will there be an encore? Arrau shakes his head vigorously: no.

"I haven't played encores for over 20 years. I always feel they are a letdown, a cheapening of the atmosphere of the concert. The audiences know this."



# Claudio Arrau at 75

## A birthday tribute by Richard Osborne

"I was of late as petty to his ends/As is the morn-dew on the myrtle leaf/To his grand sea". The words are Shakespeare's and it takes a simile of epic size to focus the splendour—the comparative depth, range and richness—of the art of Claudio Arrau. For this dapper, elegant man stands as a colossus amongst pianists, daunting and moving audiences wherever he plays.

"Music rebukes us", he once said, "for it is wider and richer than any of us knows". And it is the very scope of Arrau's art, matched with the deep humanity which emanates from him, which prompts us to number him among the very greatest pianists of the century.

Arrau was first heard in London in the spring of 1920. He played Scarlatti and Bach's *Goldberg Variations* in the Aeolian Hall and was immediately engaged to appear a fortnight later at the Royal Albert Hall in a concert ostensibly devoted to the art of Dame Nellie Melba. He played Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole* and brought the house down; bow followed bow until he felt a hand on his shoulder. It was Dame Nellie. "Now that's enough, young man", she murmured; and the young lion was ushered back to his cage.

Privately Arrau is a warm, witty, infinitely courteous man. An enquiring person, he is more than likely in a disarming way to interview his interviewer. And he is a marvellous conversationalist, never the vulgar *raconteur*. Blessed with a distinctive mind, he recognizes the fine dividing line between the barb which destroys and wit which is salutary. Berlioz's remark on the eighteen-year-old Saint-Saëns's First Symphony—"very good, but the young man lacks inexperience"—pains him only because it is often misquoted ("... lacks experience", the merest pedantry).

Arrau is also an inveterate observer of the world about him. I sometimes think when he is in London that he knows more about the hidden curiosities of the city than do many of its native musicians. In discussion Arrau will tell you that, a prodigy from the first, he gave his début recital in Chillan at the age of five. Dressed in silks and velvets (to this day he sports a magnificent Lisztian opera cloak after recitals) he played Beethoven variations, a Mozart sonata and Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. Then, in 1911, the Chilean Government passed an Act of Congress enabling the young boy to travel to Berlin where for two years before meeting his much-fabled teacher, Martin Krause, he was poorly taught. Krause, who died when Arrau was only fifteen, gave him an education which went far beyond notes and technique. A pupil of Liszt, Krause was able to teach Arrau much about Liszt's command of the *bel canto* melodic style, about his fabulously varied chordal control and the like. But more than this, Krause taught the young pianist to seek out the music's poetic and imaginative core. If you ask Arrau today wherein lies Liszt's greatness as a composer he will talk, not of virtuosity, but of mystic beauty, of a kind of Wordsworthian exaltation. Though anyone who has heard Arrau play the B minor Sonata or, say, "Chasse-neige", the last of the *Transcendental Studies*, a snow-blown stormscape of terrible splendour, will know that here, as elsewhere in Liszt, virtuosity and mystic beauty are sublimely linked.

"How can you begin to play Schumann", Arrau speculated "if you know nothing of Jean Paul or E. T. A. Hoffmann? *Flugeljahre* is *Carnaval* and what is *Kreisleriana* without Hoffmann!". Later, in another conversation, Arrau—memories of Krause clearly shining through—

reflectively added. "I conceive teaching as being something very creative. It is like being a sculptor. The danger is always that we want to make copies of ourselves. But, no, we must unfold what is there within the marble".

A prodigy himself, Arrau is aware of their problems. "The time of transition, that is a terrible period", he recalls. On paper, the young Arrau seems to have had few problems. For ten years after Krause's death he won prize upon prize, culminating in the Grand Prix in Geneva in 1927, where Cortot and Artur Schnabel were among the judges. In 1920, at the age of 17, Arrau had made his début with the Berlin Philharmonic playing the Schubert-Liszt *Wanderer* Fantasy under Karl Muck. At the age of 22 he was back at the Stern Conservatory in Berlin, now a professor. But there were times when things went less well. Unaccountable technical failures forced Arrau to ponder deeply, as many great musicians have done, the spiritual and psychological basis of the creative life, thus beginning for him a long and fruitful dialogue with the works of Jung. But here Arrau adds a note of warning. "If you meddle with psychology you must be careful not to clear away too much. You must clear away only those inhibitions and tensions which become impediments".

Arrau's habit of playing big programmes, the musical Odysseys with which we are now so familiar, began in those years. In Berlin in the 1930s he played all the keyboard music of Bach in twelve evenings, the Mozart sonatas in five, the Beethoven and Schubert sonatas, the whole of Chopin. His reasons were largely personal: "I wanted to penetrate the language of each composer".

And Bach was at the starting point of this voyage? "At this stage I had virtually devoted my life to his music and then, quite suddenly, I decided that one cannot play him on the piano". Didn't Furtwängler play Bach on the piano, with lid open on the top notch, I asked, remembering Arrau's delight in rare musical phenomena? "Oh, yes!". Arrau's eyes lit up with amusement. "It was so beautiful! So much pedal that he made the cadenzas of the Brandenburg Concertos sound like Debussy". Arrau asked whether I knew a better recording than Furtwängler's of Schubert's *Great C* major Symphony (DG Historic mono 2535 808, 5/77). I confessed not, though there have been some fine recordings since the war. Arrau remembers vividly playing the Schumann Concerto with

Furtwängler on several occasions in Berlin. (Arrau, Gieseking, Fischer, Cortot: the names crop up again and again in Berlin Philharmonic programmes of the 1920s and 1930s.) "In the first movement one would get from him suddenly a kind of 'divination'—a sudden insight into the music as it was happening. And yet you were never at a loss because his sense of ensemble, his give and take, was so perfect. It was marvellous".

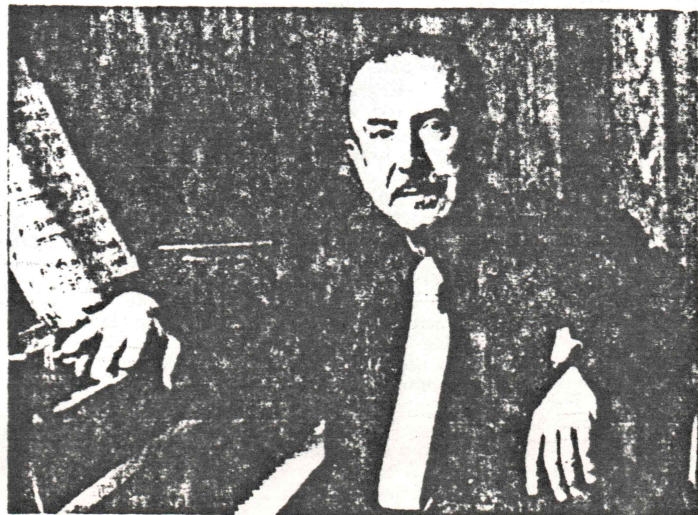
Divination. It is Arrau's favourite word. A man full of fine aphorisms quietly spoken in the natural pauses of conversation, he added "The greatest interpretative miracles have always to do with divination".

But if interpretation has to do with divination, it has to do, too, with pain, and with healing. Those who consider Arrau, like his great contemporary Rudolf Serkin, to be something of a seer among pianists, recognize in both the pain, the labour, of re-creation. Like great sculptors, they hurt themselves on the very inertia of the marble they are trying to shape. The hurt, though, is less palpably felt with Arrau than with Serkin because, paradoxically, Arrau conjures his Promethean and adamant sonorousities by the gentlest touch. He is both lion and lamb.

I asked Arrau about his conception of the sound he draws from the piano. "I have a vision of a certain sound. It must never be edgy or cutting. My whole way of playing is against this kind of thing. [His hand slices down against the arm of the chair.] In a way, the whole weight of my body goes into the keys. As a young player I did away with many conventions. There was a convention that you never used your thumb on the black keys; and people would avoid fourth and fifth fingerings simply because they hadn't developed the proper rotational movement of the wrist. Once you have this rotational control it is the arm which controls the notes, not the fingers. So often people say to me, how do you do it, those trills with the fourth and fifth?"

With a technique so fabulously based (a technique which serves Liszt and late Beethoven—not even Horowitz has that) it is no wonder that Arrau celebrates his 75th birthday with a brand new recording [reviewed on page 1440—Ed.] of one of the most fearful of all pianistic challenges: the 12 *Transcendental Studies* of Liszt. This technical surety also makes for a life emancipated from fears of stiffening fingers. A great gardener, Arrau will be seen at his home in Vermont, to the horror of friends, snipping and pruning, gloveless, for hours on end.

When Arrau played the Liszt B minor Sonata in London last June I was forced to recall Joachim Kaiser's words—"Whenever Arrau appears even the most hardened and snobbish concert-goer is startled afresh by the feeling, my God, how this man can play"—so diabolic



Claudio Arrau who celebrates his 75th birthday on February 6th

(photo: Phonogram)



was the concentration at times (wonderful this, for Arrau is the least diabolical of men), so sensuous and chaste the lyricism, each skein of melody given a pure yet tactile beauty consonant with its innermost character. With the structure taut and textures now unfathomably grand, now spun to a pointed stellar fineness, it was a reading, as Meirion Bowen wrote in the *Guardian*, which "said all".

As for the pedal, what Busoni called "the soul of the piano", Arrau uses it with special skill, placing bass harmonies and alto voices so that they form the perfectly suspended backdrop against which melody, so vital in the music of Liszt, Chopin, Schumann and Brahms, can be exquisitely or movingly declaimed. Certainly, as the late Sir Neville Cardus never tired of pointing out, there is nothing evasive or irresponsibly fey about Chopin's romanticism as Arrau evokes it. The great and now too little regarded American critic, James Huneker, wrote of the B minor Prelude—"The introduction is like a madly jutting rock, from which the eagle spirit of the composer precipitates itself". And eagle-spirited is what Arrau's Chopin invariably is. Pianistically Arrau enriches Chopin's lines, gives them a deep *bel canto* colouring much as Maria Callas was wont to do in the lines of arias by Bellini and Donizetti. And, like Callas, Arrau sees ornament as intrinsic, both to structure and to expression, never merely decorative.

To some Arrau's deployment of ornament, his penetrating left hand, the appoggiaturas that can be either caressive or laboured, trills that both snap and flow, can be disconcerting. I have seen it said that Arrau plays the *Adagio grazioso* of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 31 No. 1 'awkwardly', the coloratura inhibited by sombre, chunky left hand detailing, the perspectives closing and darkening midway. Yet Beethoven's music, tunnelling through the darker recesses of the imagination, clearly demands this; the last page heavy with trills, the air, as it were filled with the sound of beating wings.

Such decisive honesty can be uncomfortable. The divine fire and complex, slow-charged expressiveness of Arrau's playing of the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 109 (only Schnabel, very different, is as fine in my experience) is not easy to assimilate at a first or second hearing. As for Arrau's reading of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata (Philips 6580 104, 11/75) such powerful affirmations and deeply felt falterings before great issues of tone and rhythm ("the fugue should sound like some divine rage", Arrau murmured when we discussed his interpretation) cannot be expected to find any easy or immediate response from listeners or critics. It puts the music beyond everyday assimilation, beyond the more predictable expectations of most of us.

It is true, nonetheless, that Arrau at times lacks the easy felicity of Kempff, his great contemporary and antitype. Cardus, whose admiration for Arrau's Beethoven, Brahms and Chopin knew few, if any, bounds, once regretted that "this most joyous and young and amusing of men" did not occasionally smile a little more in his playing. Used to dwelling among the mountain peaks of the repertoire, Arrau the pianist has about him a certain austerity, Cardus added, which it is not easy for him to cast off. The Sonata, Op. 27 No. 1 of Beethoven, which Edwin Fischer claimed he never understood till he heard a young girl play it and which emerges in Kempff's hands with all the confiding beauty of a Gainsborough portrait is, with Arrau, perhaps too intense. Yet this warm, civilized, elegant man (who chided Cortot for lacking 'squareness' in Beethoven) can relax, bathing the tiny G major Sonata in the colours of some sun-blessed, tree-shaded Tuscan landscape. And something like the E major Sonata, Op. 14 No. 1 is granted a Mozartian breadth (Arrau's or Busoni's Mozart, that is), voices harmonized and juxtaposed as though by some great string quartet.

And Mozart? "I remember Busoni playing nine of the concertos with the Berlin Philharmonic just a few months before he died. He used a very full sound, against the custom of the day". And then, touching on something Arrau feels with increasing depth—"You know, this idea of playing Mozart with a subdued sound is so wide of the mark". (Expansive gesture.) And then, subsiding, wondering and a trifle perplexed—"For such a musician, who really created the whole cosmos . . .". On another occasion I remember Arrau saying, "You know, there is so much tragedy in Mozart's music, and when he is tragic there is no solution. No solution".

Arrau's Mozart is too little attended to these days, though I remember the late Deryck Cooke in *GRAMOPHONE* praising his incomparable sense of the full-bodied eighteenth-century style, reviewing one of Arrau's several Beethoven records of the late 1950s and early 1960s which EMI could well reissue. Arrau's Columbia recordings of the concertos, and his earlier recordings of the *Waldstein* and Op. 110 Sonatas rank among the finest post-war performances on record, better scaled to the gramophone perhaps than his later readings of these two sonatas for Philips. But, then, so many of Arrau's finest recordings require reissue.

At 75, having completed for the time being his gramophone survey of the music of Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, Schumann and Liszt, Arrau is able to turn his attentions to Schubert. "Schubert is for me the last problem of interpretation. He is so difficult; there are so many elements in his art. There is the dramatic scope of Beethoven and the simplicity of Austrian peasant music; wonderful lyrical writing and great chastity". Chastity, I rather wonderingly echoed? "Oh, yes, that too". We talked of Schnabel ("in the 1920s, you know, his technique was flawless; later he became so tense") and Eduard Erdman, both great Schubert players; and Arrau asked me what I thought of the three posthumous pieces. He had been worried by the dismissive remark of some commentator. "Sometimes I feel that

musicologists lose the capacity to experience the music. They can trace a modulation, but they cannot write about the way it reveals its expressive power. And isn't it ridiculous", Arrau adds, digressing slightly "that so often we hear the last movement of the last sonata played as a kind of gay piece? How can Schubert have been happy when he was so near to death and suffering so much? The music is full of anxiety . . . so obvious when you know his language".

After a concert Arrau likes to meet people. Indeed, so devoted and varied are his friends that were he a poet, rather than being simply a passionate and informed reader of poetry, I could imagine him writing of his friends, so much does he value them, as Yeats did in his great poem on Robert Gregory and other, later, masterpieces. This is itself a fine tribute to Arrau the man. As for Arrau the musician—miraculously, at 75, a musician seemingly in his prime—I first heard about him at university where I remember a friend talking late into the evening about the experience of hearing Arrau play the Brahms Concertos in London in the late 1950s. It had been for him the kind of formative, all-embracing experience which brings someone to music for life. And I know of other people, who rarely attend piano recitals or concerts of classical music, who will go to hear him play. The appeal, I think, is easy to determine: for Arrau is one of a line of great artists to whom music demonstrably matters. For others, more regular attenders, the appeal of his interpretations is that, like great wines, they are better for laying down, noble when lesser vintages, with poorer vinification, are flaccid on the palate.

My final thought is that Arrau is first and foremost a seeker; only then a communicator. As I said at the outset, he is more than likely in a disarming way to interview the interviewer. We wish him well on his birthday.

[To celebrate Claudio Arrau's 75th birthday on February 6th several recordings are being released by Phonogram this month and the reviews appear in this issue—Ed.]

## Editorial Notes

(continued from page 1382)

### More recording news

John Georgiadis, leader of the London Symphony Orchestra, has signed a contract with CBS to make records in which he will both play and 'conduct from the violin'. His first release, due next month, will be a collection of virtuoso works for violin and piano under the title "Moto Perpetuo"; this will be followed in May by the reissue of "Gypsy Carnival", an album which was released privately just over a year ago and reviewed in our February 1977 issue. A Viennese album with Georgiadis's own chamber ensemble is planned for release in the autumn.

### Paul Myers

Until now based with CBS in London, Mr Paul Myers has been appointed Vice-President of A&R, Masterworks, taking up the position in New York in July. Mr Myers joined CBS as a producer in New York in 1962, was transferred to London in 1968 to establish a European classical A&R operation, and is currently Director of Masterworks.

### Frank Bridge

Mr Paul Hindmarsh, Assistant Librarian at the Scottish Music Archive, is compiling a comprehensive thematic catalogue of the music of Frank Bridge, and would be grateful to receive any information about the whereabouts of certain autograph manuscripts, including the

Oration for cello and orchestra, *Phantasm* for piano and orchestra, the one-act opera *A Christmas Rose*, String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2, Piano Quintet, String Sextet, *Two Poems for orchestra* and *Sir Roger de Coverley*. Any assistance should be sent to 7 Lilybank Gardens, Glasgow, G12 8RZ.

### Apology

We must apologize most sincerely for any embarrassment or confusion caused by our mentioning the French tenor Georges Thill in our obituaries last month (page 1234). Having recently celebrated his 80th birthday on December 14th last, M Thill is happily still among us. In France Pathé Marconi released a four-record set of many of the artist's 78 rpm recordings to coincide with the event.

### News in brief

Any reader interested in obtaining a cabinet for the HMV Model 192 gramophone free of charge should contact Mr Richard Wood, 132 Allestree Lane, Allestree, Derby DE3 2JY. The second edition of *Musician and Composer Societies: a world directory* by John R. Douglas appears in *Notes*, the quarterly journal of the American Music Library Association. Copies are obtainable from the Association, 343 South Main Street (Room 205), Ann Arbor, Michigan 48018, USA, price US \$5.

## GRAMOPHONE BOOKSHELF

see page 1354 for details



# CLAUDIO ARRAU

## Last of the Titans

The Boston Globe

ARTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1981

### In the presence of a last titan

#### REVIEW | MUSIC

CLAUDIO ARRAU, pianist — In a recital of works by Beethoven, Schumann, Debussy, Chopin, and Liszt, presented by the Boston University Celebrity Series Sunday night at Symphony Hall.

By Richard Buell  
Globe Correspondent

There is no other piano sonority in the world today like Claudio Arrau's. It is something quite unbelievable — large, rich, deep, and grand; but also natural and unforced, as if issuing from Debussy's idealized piano: "an instrument without hammers."

Quite simply, we were in the presence of one of the very last of the titans.

To be at Symphony Hall Sunday night was to hear not only a superbly finished instrumental mastery, marvelously intact at the age of 78, but also the insight and warmth and sweep that characterize this sovereign pianist at his very best. Quite simply, we were in the presence of one of the very last of the titans.

Not to belabor the point, but at the beginning, in the Beethoven E-flat major (Op.27, No.1), that highly personal sonority was the major claim on the attention, more so, for a while at least, than Arrau's major status as a scholarly interpreter of the German classics.

There was nothing unbalanced about it, certainly — you realized that Arrau's way of hearing and playing the notes, from the resonant depths of the bass upward, is less an expression of a "taste" in timbres and nuances than it is of a psychological perception of the music.

So it was at the opening of the Andante — the dynamics were that



CLAUDIO ARRAU The stuff of legends

hushed — that the sound came as from behind a cloud then, gradually, was there, materializing into the compositional drama. And some terrifically sustained, organ-like tones in the third movement showed why it is that expressions like "tonal avalanche" are applied to Arrau's playing: Here, palpably, the air shook with their sounding. As an approach to the piece, Arrau's was a somber, deliberate, personal one, utterly compelling throughout.

Arrau's progress through the lyrical, fantastic, dramatic "Etudes Symphoniques" of Robert Schumann — with the five posthumous variations included — was as much psychological as pianistic, with a truly spellbinding sense of one episode begetting the next, this with all the powerful staccato chord technique and legato-staccato contrasts and pacing that a heroic performance demands. This was one such.

In the rest of the program there

were delights that passed from the sophisticated to the naive — a frank enjoyment of the sombre dissonances imbedded in the Chopin F minor Fantasia; the whole-tone washes of color that dissolve the two French nursery tunes in "Jardins sous la pluie" from Debussy's "Estampes"; and at the last the obessional excitement of Liszt's "Dante" Sonata (from the "Annees de pelerinage: Italie"), rare Liszt playing that had nothing in it of unpleasant calculation or sentimentality.

What was somehow most impressive of all about this artist was a kind of extreme virtuosity that he embodied — Claudio Arrau's playing was not brilliant at all in some of the more familiar senses of interpretive brilliance, but a dark, knowing, inward way of making music; one that, in checking the impulses towards emotional catharsis, can as easily disturb as satisfy, though this pianist is of the stuff that legends are made.

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By STEPHEN CERA

## Claudio Arrau: far beyond technique

At 74, the eminent pianist Claudio Arrau isn't looking back on his brilliant career as a concert soloist. It would be unlike Arrau to dwell on the past.

Embarking on his 60th anniversary season, with appearances last night and tonight with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Arrau shows little sign of tiring.

He looks forward to more than 100 concert engagements in the coming season, plus an intensive round of recording activity, teaching, and editing of piano music. The variety of the activity, and the pace, are typical of Arrau.

As an artist, he exemplifies a vanishing breed among concert pianists. Arrau is a thinker, a philosopher, a poet, a soul-searcher, diametrically opposed to the hordes of exhibitionistic virtuosos who clutter the piano scene. Mere technical display is anathema to him, one who has spent a lifetime performing, studying, and rethinking the masterpieces of the piano literature.

How does he maintain the pace, which could tire someone half his age? The pianist shrugged his shoulders when the question was put to him at his Long Island home. There seems to be no time to think about rest or inactivity. The piano always beckons.

It was so even when Arrau was a young boy. "They couldn't tear me away from the instrument, even for meals. They used to force food into my mouth as I sat at the piano."

Obviously, this was no ordinary child. Arrau emerged as a prodigy in his native Chile at the age of 4. The Chilean government, with unusual farsightedness, recognized the exceptional talent, and offered the boy a 10-year scholarship to study in Berlin. The award enabled him to work with Martin Krause, one of the last pupils

of the legendary Franz Liszt.

Today, Arrau is especially noted for his interpretations of Liszt's music. This isn't coincidence; the link with the Liszt tradition is real. Arrau is fond of retracing his musical genealogy, pointing out that just as Krause studied with Liszt, Liszt studied with Carl Czerny, and Czerny with Beethoven. Smiling, the pianist relishes the thought that he can be considered a "musical great-great-grandson" of Beethoven.

Krause turned out to be Arrau's only serious teacher, an "his most important musical influence. His progress during those early years in Berlin must have been extraordinary, in that Arrau was to have no other teacher.

"How was such progress possible? "I had a lesson with Krause every day. He supervised my practicing. I even practiced in a special room in his apartment. He developed not only my talent, but my entire personality. He took charge of my reading, my general culture. He occupied himself with everything to do with me."

Krause's death, when Arrau was only 15, was a grievous blow. Some problems arose, periods of intense self-doubt. Arrau turned to close friends for support and encouragement, and received it. He hasn't looked back since. Extensive concert activity came quickly: Berlin Philharmonic and London debuts at 17, and solo recital engagements elsewhere.

Meanwhile, he was busy building up a vast repertoire, ranging from Bach to the moderns of the day, Ravel, Prokofiev, Schoenberg.

How did he find time to learn all this music? "I was never lazy. I was interested in getting to know all the output of all the great composers, to know each one's musical language." Many consider Arrau today's foremost interpreter of the great

Austro-German piano literature, which ranges from Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven through Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Schoenberg. The extent of this literature makes it a fit subject for lifelong study, which Arrau has done.

But he has branched out to embrace other styles, other composers. Many consider him a Chopin player virtually without peer. His interpretations of the French masters, Debussy and Ravel, are cherished. Arrau plans to turn more and more to French music in the near future. "They still haven't realized what a peak in music Debussy is. It's a problem of interpretation—too much appreciated only for the sound. I think there are deeper aspects involved, spiritual aspects which very few people realize are there . . . For me, the greatest Debussy interpretation ever was 'Swanes' conducted by Furtwaengler. Nobody will believe it! But really, there was what Debussy should be."

And what of Bach? Arrau's thoughts on the subject have changed over the years. He was performing the entire "Well-Tempered Clavier" in public at the age of 14. In 1935, he played the complete keyboard works of Bach in a series of 12 recitals. Since then, he has come to feel that Bach shouldn't be played on the piano, that the modern concert grand imparts a sound and character to the music that is foreign to it. He's content to leave Bach to the harpsichordists.

After 60 years of public performance, Arrau speaks frankly about it. "Of course, one gets nervous in front of an audience. Their reaction will influence you. If you feel they are with you, then you give everything you have. But one must also develop a certain independence. One must never try simply to please." It's a characteristic refrain: the disdain for showy dis-

play, for cheap thrills and easy success.

Did technical problems ever arise, even in Liszt or Chopin Etudes? Apparently not. "I was allowed to play naturally, like an animal jumps. I had a natural sense of movement. If I encountered unforeseen difficulties, I found movements which solved them." It sounds so simple.

He's intent on resisting "fades of fashion," thus rationalizing the absence of Schubert sonatas from his programs in the past decade, and an unwillingness to perform Scriabin nowadays (though he used to, and admires the Russian composer). An emphasis on French music will come next. Then it might be Schoenberg's turn ("I played Schoenberg in the '20's when it was really risky.") The Mozart concertos beckon. Even new music holds an interest. If Arrau attends a concert these days, it will likely as not be to hear a new work. He plays Ives at home, and speaks respectfully of piano music by Pierre Boulez and Elliott Carter.

He is editing the sonatas of Beethoven. It will complement his work as a teacher, to which he is strongly committed. His goal there isn't to have his students parrot him. He wants to nurture what is special in each individual, comparing his function as a teacher to the way a gardener cultivates plants. He feels challenged and renewed by this activity, describing it in ideal terms as an interplay of ideas.

Arrau doesn't fear for the future of the solo recital, and is unconvinced by arguments that audiences are dwindling, costs rising, and the repertoire remaining stubbornly stuck in traditional Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century molds.

"One sees in so many places new audiences, filling halls. Programs today are so much less aimed at simply pleasing the audience, winning it over. The level of re-



Claudio Arrau

tional programs has improved . . . . What I don't approve of is this division of audiences between people who go to hear avant-garde music and will listen to nothing else, and people who go only up to Brahms. It's so ridiculous."

The desire to break down barriers is characteristic of Claudio Arrau. His career has always reconciled opposites: Latin temperament with the Austro-German musical tradition, mastery of the old with eagerness to understand what is new.



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In A Salute To  
**CLAUDIO ARRAU**  
On His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*





# Artistry Grows With Age, Says Arrau at 75

By JOSEPH HOROWITZ

**C**laudio Arrau, born February 6, 1903, in Chillán, Chile, will celebrate his 75th birthday a day early this afternoon by playing Beethoven, Liszt and Brahms at Avery Fisher Hall. It is one of 92 concerts booked for his "Golden Jubilee" season, a tour of duty including appearances in 14 countries and with more than 20 orchestras, as well as five recording sessions lasting about five days apiece.

Such durability is impressive, but not unique; as musicians go, great pianists, like great conductors, are a hearty breed. Artur Rubinstein, for one, was in his 70's when he performed a celebrated series of 10 Carnegie Hall recitals in the space of six weeks. But if Mr. Rubinstein's septuagenarian vigor reflected a monumental *joie de vivre*, Mr. Arrau's can nearly seem a tactic of survival. "I can't imagine reducing the number of

concerts I play," he quietly reflects. "No, I think for me it would be impossible. I would go through hell. I wouldn't risk it. I might simply get too scared to go on stage again."

He has been playing 100 concerts a year for decades. The only regular breaks come in the summer, when he and his wife leave their Douglaston, Long Island home to spend several weeks on a 400-acre Vermont estate they bought about 15 years ago. Last July and August, the Vermont holiday was an opportunity for Mr. Arrau to finish work on the second volume of a new edition of the Beethoven sonatas, and to restore some Schubert and Liszt to his active repertoire. He also took time off for a lengthy interview in which he contemplated his approaching anniversary and discussed his continuing evolution as a pianist.

The Arrau estate remains secluded and generously wooded. The main house is a sprawling wooden structure, part of which dates from 1806. There is also a picturesque red barn, and a large, back-

yard pond Thoreau would have appreciated.

Though the house maintains a rustic air, the painstaking deliberation of Arrau the artist is everywhere apparent. The furnishings, which include such authentic Victorian amenities as a two-seated wooing chair as well as an expert collection of New England antiques, are comfortable, even casual, but undeniably elegant all the same. Mr. Arrau himself is an impeccable dresser. A short man, once chunky, he is now trim, at times almost frail. But his flaring nostrils and high cheekbones, dapper mustache and shiny hair still connote the dark good looks of a Latin American man of the world.

His hazel green eyes are windows to his moods. When he is pensive, they cloud and look away. When an enormous German Shepherd named Rex, nearly 15 years old, lumbers over to greet a visitor, they harden with annoyance. "Go away, dear," he tells the dog. "Go to your mistress." The creature does not budge. Mr. Arrau's eyes bulge to circles, his mouth contracts with impatience. He whips around towards the back of the house. "Ruth! Ruth! Call Rexie. He is bothering us!"

Mr. Arrau's full attention registers with stark force. His speech is slow, grave, and punctuated by moments of silence. "My playing is more intense now," he says. "The expression is more concentrated than before. There are new insights, particularly in Schubert, in late Beethoven. Even in Debussy there are certain things, what I call his

*Continued on Page 19*

**The New York Times**  
ARTS AND LEISURE



"If you feel too secure, then something's wrong."



spiritual aspects. In the Schubert C minor Sonata, for instance, there are certain things in the last movement that I used to play in an almost graceful way, or a lighter way. Now I feel very strongly that the whole movement is actually very tragic. And it should be played a little more heavily, and never in a sort of gay way. Some people play it as a sort of tarantella, but for me it is absolutely a certainty that this movement is very close to the idea of death."

He feels his fingers have never been as agile.

"It is a very strange phenomenon. Little problems in technique that one has before—suddenly you let the muscles alone, and they solve them, so to speak. I have found myself rather surprised. I always believed in my own progress, in growing. But I thought I would have to continually work for it. . . . Gradually in the last 10 years I have been practicing less, but more concentratedly—for now, only three hours a day. Ten years ago, it was seven or eight. Sometimes, when I was young and in a hurry to learn something, I would practice up to 14 hours.

"The system of practicing is different now. If you don't get everything right away, one doesn't insist anymore. You let it mature by itself, and three days

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**'The older you are,  
the better the  
personality is  
integrated.'**

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later you come back to it, and suddenly the problems are solved, without having to repeat too much. It doesn't lead anywhere to work with the will power. The better performances are always those in which I let things happen."

The entire extent of his repertory, he feels, has benefited—even music that is partly display, or youthfully effusive. "Impetuosity grows with the years," he says. "It's one of those fallacies that young people are more outgoing than older people." Mr. Arrau leans forward, and his tone lightens abruptly. "It sounds funny, I know, but sometimes I tell my wife, or my close friends, that I imagine that I play in a much more *impetuous* way than before. But of course when people know that you are a certain age, they automatically apply the usual fallacies, that you must show some signs of age, which is not always true. I think that an artist in his development doesn't necessarily have an up and down. In most cases, an artist's development only goes up."

He is both possessed by heightened emotions and immersed in metaphysical abstractions. When he speaks of exploring the nearby countryside, it is as "experiencing the All—an almost mystical pleasure." When he speaks of playing the piano with greater concentration and intensity, it is as a "conquering of vanity," an "overcoming of the ego."

"I don't dare to say that the vanity has yet entirely disappeared—it is almost impossible for a performer to get rid of his desire to achieve. But the older you are, the better the personality is integrated. The message becomes more universal. It still carries the blood of the interpreter, but in a richer, wider and deeper sense.

"When one overcomes certain handicaps of vanity, one doesn't use the music to project oneself so much. To take a very vulgar example: I couldn't care less whether the audience likes me or not. That sounds very conceited, but it isn't that at all. I'm doing what I have to do—if they like it, fine, if they don't. . . . You reach a moment where in a certain way you don't care."

As Mr. Arrau himself acknowledges, he nevertheless seems too embattled to ever reach true quiescence. An early crisis set the stage for much that followed. So astonishing were his early gifts (he taught himself to read music by the age of four) that the Chilean Congress established a 10-year scholarship to send him to Berlin with his mother and sister. There he was taught by Martin Krause, a pupil of Liszt. But Krause, who became like a father, died when Mr. Arrau was 15. Despite a string of artistic triumphs, the young pianist spent six years wrestling with traumatic self-doubt. At 21, he tried psychoanalysis, and it saved his career. He has since turned into a full-blown Jungian, always alive to the presence of Collective Unconscious impulses that meddle in ways men cannot control.

"The anxiety is always there," he says of performing. "If you feel too secure, then something's wrong." He remembers instances of "neurotic stage fright," and talks of "breakdowns" the way other men talk of catching colds. Of a lapse that derailed Beethoven's Op. 110 in New York two seasons ago, he says: "It was definitely caused by a destructive tendency. Sometimes, when you have been playing extremely well, there comes a reaction from the subconscious that it's too good to be true. Then you fail in one way or the other. It all goes back to the prodigy period. A child when he is trained as a performer feels that he can't live up to what is expected. Sometimes he reacts by escaping into failure, to show to himself and to others who expect a lot from him."

At the piano, Mr. Arrau applies in full measure the weight of his Faustian searching. Just as each passing mood consumes his features when he speaks, when he plays the music takes hold at every point; its flow is seldom simple and never glib. Some people may find such grinding entanglement more perturbing than uplifting—navigating a writhing flood of moods and tempos in the first movement of the "Hammerklavier," Mr. Arrau can seem over-burdened with doubt. But the underlying angst is magnificent and unimpeachable; it is the bedrock of his humbling intensity, practically his signature.

"I sometimes look back and am very grateful about my years as a prodigy," he reflects. "Because I didn't go to school, I never had to do things because they were done by others. That produces a certain attitude—never taking things for granted that people consider one has to accept. It went into my development as an interpreter. Of course it produces a tremendous loneliness; it is frightening sometimes. But loneliness is indispensable in any artistic creation whatsoever. I never complain about being lonely."

Mr. Arrau guards the purity of his environment. He shuns parties and crowds, and distrusts machines. He prefers to be interviewed without the use of a tape recorder. He doesn't drive, and he cannot operate a phonograph—his wife puts the records on for him.

"There has been such a flood of mediocrity in the field of interpretation in the last 20 or 30 years, since maybe the deaths of Schnabel and Fischer, of the great musicians," he says, and winces. "Now we have pianists by the dozen. There is such a search for quick success. I think the current practice of young pianists playing late Beethoven is a little absurd. They are at that age so much involved in self-expression, in self-assertion, that it is very difficult for them intuitively to understand the message of late Beethoven.

"And there is this question of tempos. If you would ask them, these young pianists, for what reason they play, say, the last movement of the Brahms D minor Concerto as fast as they do, they will not know what to tell you. Or if they are cynical enough, they will tell you they get more applause. My tempos are also the tempos that Brahms used to take—my teacher heard him several times. Or let's say, that Clara Schumann took, or even Schnabel."

Perhaps he idealizes the past—judged from broadcasts and recordings, Schnabel's tempos in the Brahms B flat Concerto are faster than Mr. Arrau's, and Mr. Arrau's own tempos in the D minor are somewhat slower than they used to be. But, incontrovertibly, Arrau, who speaks reverently of Busoni's Beethoven, and of the playing of Eugene d'Albert and Teresa Carreño, remains a surviving link to a more focused musical culture. The Berlin where he grew up had opera houses led by Kleiber, Klempner and Walter. Wilhelm Furtwängler conducted the Philharmonic. Busoni, and then Schoenberg, taught composition at the Academy of Arts. Mr. Arrau's own prodigious contributions to musical Berlin have included a historic 1935 series of concerts in which he played the entire known solo clavier output of Bach, followed in 1936 by five evenings of Mozart, and in 1937 by four of Schubert.

(continued)



# Claudio Arrau's Artistry at 75

He frankly embodies the Romantic ideal of the artist as solitary, struggling hero. It is an old ideal, increasingly challenged both by circumstance and opinion. The models Mr. Arrau admires are fading with age; the solitude he cultivates grow harder than ever to sustain.

Even at the piano, he can already seem a throwback to a different era. Rehearsing Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto last season at Avery Fisher Hall, curled over the keys and gravely self-absorbed, Mr. Arrau in his three-piece suit looked so incongruous that the nonchalant New York Philharmonic could almost have been a backdrop added by mistake. Afterwards, there was some complaining about the listlessness of the orchestra. They will play better for the concert, Mr. Arrau said; in rehearsal, the musicians are always casual. Does Claudio Arrau ever play casually? someone asked. "I can't!" he answered, his eyes aghast, his face burning with feeling. He does not know how. ■

"He frankly embodies the Romantic ideal of the artist as solitary, struggling hero."

## Happy Birthday, Claudio Arrau

By DONAL HENAHAN

"Claudio Arrau celebrated his 75th birthday a day early yesterday afternoon at Avery Fisher Hall with a performance that took the cake for pianistic and musical excellence."

**C**LAUDIO ARRAU celebrated his 75th birthday a day early yesterday afternoon at Avery Fisher Hall with a performance that took the cake for pianistic and musical excellence. The program was vintage Arrau and so, for the most part, was the keyboard command. The Chilean-born musician's playing, which has a perplexing way of turning fussy or self-consciously beautiful at times, carried conviction throughout this recital.

Mr. Arrau took on a back-breaking program, as usual: Beethoven's "Les Adieux" Sonata, the Liszt Sonata and the Brahms Sonata No. 3 in F minor. The Beethoven, which does not lend itself to a remarkable interpretative range, found the pianist in a mood to be straightforward with splendid results. The slow movement edged toward sentimentality here and there, but Mr. Arrau's restraint and conviction kept that narrow line uncrossed. The finale needed a glimmer more of good humor, perhaps, but Mr. Arrau is not one to look for jolly. Joy for him is a serious matter.

No pianist tackles the Liszt without respect, of course, but the Brahms So-

nata in F minor rates even a bit higher on the difficulty scale. It is a huge bramble of notes, often clumsily laid out for the hand, and it goes on beyond most pianists' endurance. Mr. Arrau drew the work taut and held it together remarkably well in spite of, or possibly because of, his resort to shifting tempos and a dangerously wide rubato. The sonorities, while not as plush as those that Rubinstein used to lavish on this music, never lost their translucent quality or lapsed into pure muddle, as can happen.

By Mr. Arrau's age, if not well before, technique can begin to slip. And at a few spots, such as early in the Liszt, left-hand details were either missing or not articulated cleanly. But the pianist's agility was demonstrated again and again. When, for instance, he arrived at the Allegro energico in the last movement he launched it at a breathtaking pace while maintaining a wonderfully soft and even staccato.

Even more impressively, when Mr. Arrau came to the final pages of the exhausting Brahms sonata, he was able to shift into the Presto and honor the composer's mounting demands for "fire" and "passion" right up to the thunderously grand coda. It was in every way a happy birthday party.

NEW YORK TIMES

February 6, 1978

NY TIMES 2/6/78





Associated Press Photo

## 75—and still playing strong

Pianist Claudio Arrau cuts a 75th-birthday cake with the help of his wife, Ruth, during celebration at Lincoln Center yesterday. The world-renowned musician had just given a recital in Avery Fisher Hall. The Post's Speight Jenkins was there; Page 24.



By MANUELA HOELTERHOFF

"I have never experienced a minute of doubt that the reason for my being on this planet was to be a pianist," Claudio Arrau once said. And for 70 of his 75 years the peripatetic Chilean pianist has been tramping around the world playing, in particular, Liszt, Beethoven, Brahms and Schumann. His current annual tour takes him through America and Europe for some 96 concerts in 40 cities.

Nevertheless, Arrau's years before the public have not been free from upheaval. Three times his career almost disappeared: Once, when the child prodigy became bored at age eight; later when the 15-year-old travelling virtuoso was traumatized by the death of his teacher, Martin Krause; and again in the 1930s, when Arrau's Germany-based career was rerouted to America by Hitler's ascent. Always he regained control and, over the years, a steady kind of fame, not dependent on extravagant media attention. Retiring and without evident eccentricities, Arrau has become a quiet legend.

This past Monday, Arrau turned 75 and the day before, at three in the afternoon, celebrated his birthday with a recital at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. The event, part of the "Great Performers" series, was sold out, with surplus admirers surrounding the pianist on stage. For two hours Arrau's magnificent pianism transformed that enormous, gilded, cafeteria-like auditorium into a noble hall.

He chose composers closely associated with him: After Beethoven's "Les Adieux" Sonata, he launched into Liszt's towering B minor Sonata, a half-hour piece that he developed with an almost menacing intensity. Another technically strenuous piece, Brahms' sprawling Sonata No. 3 in F minor followed the intermission. Afterwards, much applause and some cheers, but nothing excessive. Nobody gets loud or maudlin at Arrau concerts.

Two days prior to the concert Arrau talked about his career at his home in Douglaston, Long Island, a pleasant-looking, hilly town with curious old houses about 25 minutes from Manhattan. The pianist has lived there with his wife, Ruth Schneider Arrau, since 1947. Tall first crowd the white frame house overlooking Long Island Sound. Once past the gate, a narrow walk leads to the front entrance. A maid opens the door, followed by a very hairy gray cat, which is quickly shushed away. The visitor is deposited in a sunken, carpeted music room.

Memories and mementos seem to be everywhere—stacked and layered: At least 20 African carvings huddle together over the fireplace; pre-Columbian pottery crowds the bookcases; Russian icons cover one wall; another corner by the grand piano is devoted to Japanese prints. The telephone ring is muffled, the lighting muted. Time is not rushed here.

After perhaps five minutes Arrau comes softly down the stairs, a small black-haired man nattily dressed in slightly flared slacks and a brown leather jacket. He looks a healthy 60.

He sits down, smiling slightly and proceeds to interview me. "Riga!" he exclaims when I tell him of my mother's Latvian birthplace, which hasn't been easily accessible for 30 years; Arrau last played there before World War II. "What a beautiful city. And the audience, so cultured and

knowledgeable." He *has* been everywhere.

Arrau's memory is undimmed. With a little prodding he brings back his childhood in Chillan, Chile, and the day when he trotted up to his mother's piano, looked at the music and played a few Chopin preludes. He was five years old and had never had a lesson. "Somehow, suddenly I could read music," Arrau recalls, still slightly mystified by the process. A recital followed at Chillan's candle-lit hall. "I wasn't really nervous. It was late in the evening. In fact, I was falling asleep. But the candlelight—it remains a beautiful remembrance."

Arrau's mother (his father had died when he was a year old) took him to Berlin, where the unusual child, who had subconsciously established a line to composers of the past, became a pupil of the esteemed pedagogue Martin Krause. A better match would have been difficult. Krause had a direct physical link with the past. He was a pupil of Liszt, who studied with Czerny, who studied with Beethoven. The nine-year-old Arrau became, so to speak, the pianistic grandchild of Liszt.

Berlin, then a glittering metropolis racing toward doom, provided a stimulating, nurturing atmosphere. At 16 and 17, Arrau won the famed Liszt Prize twice in a row; it hadn't been awarded in 45 years. And in 1927 he added the then prestigious Geneva Prize. One of the judges was Artur Schnabel.

Arrau never took another teacher after Krause's death, but he did for a long time work out certain psychological blocks with the Jungian analyst Hubert Abrahamson. More introverted than outgoing, Arrau frequently found the prospect of public playing utterly paralyzing (he sometimes still does and cancels). With Abrahamson's guidance, Arrau began investigating his neurotic tensions. The idea, he recalls, was *not* to liberate him from his creative tensions—there has to be a certain chafing—but to prevent any debilitating neuroses from arising. In fact, Arrau thinks psychoanalysis is important for any performer "to really open up, to get rid of the blocks, to develop your creativity completely."

Perhaps because of this search for balance amidst emotional turmoil Arrau's interpretations are generally free from fussiness and eccentricity; he believes strongly in adhering to a composer's wishes and notations. And, not surprisingly, he doesn't cultivate any intriguingly strange habits. He wraps himself in a Romantic Era cape after a performance, but that is about it.

And unlike Vladimir Horowitz, two years his junior, he probably would not threaten to cancel a performance in Florida if fresh gray sole wasn't flown in from New York. Arrau gets his gustatory pleasures from salad, meats and yogurt. He likes to be hungry before a concert ("makes you alert"), and so he only has a cup of coffee.

Arrau's repertoire is huge. By now he has mastered all the Beethoven concertos and sonatas, Bach's keyboard works, all of Schumann, most of Chopin, Liszt and Schubert and large selections of Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky and Schoenberg. It's all stored in his head, for ready retrieval. "Even if I haven't played a work in 20 years," he emphasizes, "it's there; I can play it from memory."

Arrau, of course, isn't the only artist who has lived past 65 without dire consequences. Rubinstein, Stokowski, Picasso

and Casals all continued to do magnificent work once past the conventional prime years. Horowitz and conductor Karl Bohm still are. I asked whether this constant exercise of the mind helps keep artists from aging, while other senior citizens, deprived of challenges and active usefulness, sometimes start to doddle. "Well, I think any kind of effort is good. Taking new pieces, working on them every day, memorizing a bit—that keeps you to a certain extent from aging too much. And the continuing performing, the music going through you all the time, makes you react and keeps your sensitivity alert."

Rooted as he is in the past, Arrau has not shut out the present. John Cage's music is on a chair, a Stockhausen piece has already made it to the piano and sometime soon, Arrau wants to play one of the Boulez sonatas. Whenever he no longer feels challenged by a piece, he puts it aside for awhile. Right now Chopin's Sonata No. 3 is out of favor, but all of Schubert is in.

Somewhat surprisingly, at least for this listener, he finds Schubert's piano works probably the most difficult to interpret. "To catch the sadness, the melancholy without becoming sentimental, that is extremely difficult."

"I have never experienced a minute of doubt that the reason for my being on this planet was to be a pianist."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

February 10, 1978



# Claudio Arrau at 75: a master in superb form

## MUSIC

### SPEIGHT JENKINS

AT THE CONCLUSION of his public 75th birthday celebration, Claudio Arrau received a huge birthday cake (all candles successfully extinguished in one breath), but he gave far more than he received: yesterday afternoon's audience at Avery Fisher Hall heard a real master in superb form.

The program put him happily in his element: Beethoven (the "Les Adieux" Sonata, Opus 81a), the Liszt Sonata and Brahms Sonata No. 3. To all of these Arrau brought his familiar virtues, which include a virtuosic technique, enormous musical sensibility, great taste, a solid, somewhat Germanic

approach to the masterpieces of the 19th century and an interesting tone.

The tone perhaps is the most individual. Arrau does not try for the poetic or the mellow, rounded sound. Instead he stays ever so slightly on the percussive side, making a strong, clear and virile production.

Nothing about the pianist's one was dull; the consistency throughout each of the pieces suggested sonority and power many varieties of a solid Burgundy.

Vladimir Horowitz once said that expertise in using the pedal determines whether a pianist is interesting. On that standard Arrau is a very interesting pianist indeed, because particularly in the Liszt Sonata he attained

startling volume in the bass without ever muddying up the sound.

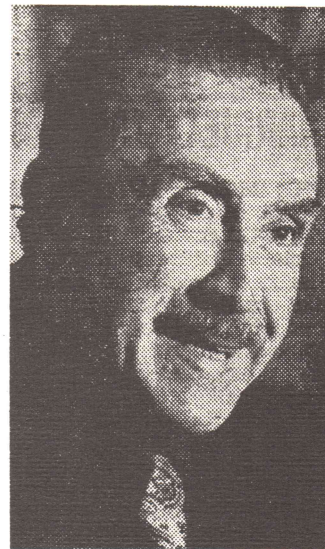
Fidelity to the composer's dynamic and tempo markings has long been the pianist's watchword, and it was so again on Sunday. There were moments, of course, where his interpretation took precedence as in the conclusion of the second movement of the Brahms when he played the Adagio section at much more than a soft level, but in general the pianist's effects came from painstaking accuracy.

Each of the Sonatas had fine points to remember. "Les Adieux" seemed more interiorized than usual, with the "farewell" seemingly forever. The "return" was a brilliantly played movement in which the various sections were bridged with a masterly sense of phrase.

An Arrau specialty for many years, the Liszt Sonata seemed on this occasion more lyrical and intense than before. Its conclusion of the Andante section came the closest to poetry in the recital, and the speed and clarity of the final Allegro favorably compared to his own prior performances.

While the Brahms Sonata was all of a piece dramatically, it seemed occasionally a bit too heavy. Particularly at the end of the first movement more lightness would have been welcome, and in the second movement there was eloquence but not enough sweetness.

The final, however—powerful, vivacious and totally accurate—brought the audience to its feet in tribute to Claudio Arrau.



CLAUDIO ARRAU

"A REAL MASTER IN SUPERB FORM"

THE NEW YORK POST



## Classical LPs

# A Grand Set by Pianist Arrau

*By Heuwell Tircuit*

**J**UST in time for his 75th Anniversary recital season, Philips has issued a pair of major releases from pianist **Claudio Arrau**. The main item is an amazing set of all the **Etudes of Liszt**. (Philips 6747 412, two discs.) It contains the 12 Transcendental Etudes plus the three Etudes de Concert. They are by far the best Etude set yet.

Arrau plays with all the technique required. Like a Horowitz set, this is simply to be taken for granted. Yet others have recorded these pieces with all the notes in place. What distinguishes the Arrau release is the dignity and nobility of his concept. He plays them as musical statements first and foremost. Display is never an issue.

The sheer poetry of the Concert Etudes — particularly in the famous "La Leggerezza" and "Un Sospiro" — is stunning. Taken in the raw, they are each rather vulgar examples of period salon music. But Arrau overcomes that danger, with a grand sense of style and personality. Here is Liszt in the grand manner, and very moving it is, too.

Arrau also contributes another disc to his Schumann cycle. Except for the flashy "Papillons," the set is devoted to Schumann's most lyric piano works: "Kinderszenen," "Blumenstueck" and a wonder performance of the Three Romances, opus 28. (Philips 6500 395.)

All these, in fact, are played for color and gentleness. "Papillons," for instance, is less an actual set of waltzes than a recollection of them — like a party long gone, but fondly remembered. It is Arrau's gift that he never seeks his own glory at the composer's expense.

Both sets are treasureable.



"WHAT DISTINGUISHES THE ARRAU  
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# Album Honors Pianist's 75th Birthday

By Tilden Wells  
Special To The Dispatch

Philips Records pays tribute to veteran pianist Claudio Arrau's 75th birthday with a Liszt album (6747,412) including the 12 *Transcendental Etudes* and *Concert Etudes*, among them the popular *Un sospiro*.

These two discs comprise sovereign testimony of Arrau's stature as a great artist of the keyboard. With unimpaired and even more phenomenal technical wizardry than ever he approaches these demanding works not as display pieces but as tone poems for piano.

LIKE ANOTHER COLLEAGUE, older than he, Arrau has grown in artistry as the years advance. If he should never make another recording, this one could suffice as the crowning achievement of a long and distinguished career.

## A piano master at 75

CHILEAN-born veteran pianist Claudio Arrau is still a workaholic — happiest when he's sitting in front of a keyboard. He will celebrate his 75th birthday by playing a recital Sunday afternoon at 3 in Fisher Hall as part of the Great Performers at Lincoln Center series. The program lists three sonatas, including the big Liszt Sonata in B Minor.

Monday, the actual day, he will celebrate at a small evening party but he won't give up practicing as he has his first rehearsal

Wednesday for three dates with the New Jersey Symphony.

Of six great pianists named by Newsweek recently (Horowitz, Michaelangeli, Richter, Rubinstein, Serkin), Arrau maintains the fullest concert schedule playing about 100 dates a year. How does he maintain his technique and vitality? "I call it the wisdom of the muscles," he said. "I can do some things much more easily today than 20 years ago."

HARRIETT JOHNSON



THE NEW YORK POST

"These two discs comprise sovereign testimony of

Arrau's stature as a great artist of the keyboard."

## Arrau Tops the Liszt

GIVEN THE fact that there are a couple hundred professional pianists floating around the world, all quite capable of whipping up a storm of good, crashing Liszt, what distinguishes a great artist from the crowd?

Interpretation is a large part of it — the ability to dig into the essence of what the composer wanted and to make the message more important than the flashy fingers of the medium.

With Liszt, who wrote the most virtuosic of all piano literature, that job becomes a

kind of final testing ground. Many performers can play Liszt, but few can make it into something other than an onslaught of impressive notes.

As a salute to a great performer on his 75th birthday, Philips has released Claudio Arrau's performance of the 12 Liszt "Transcendental Etudes" and the three "Etudes de concert" (6747 412, 2 discs). If one were to choose one piece of definitive artistic statement on Liszt, this would be it.

Arrau spent most of his

formative years studying under one of Liszt's last pupils, Martin Krause, so the line is direct. There is a closeness felt here, an understanding that goes beyond the speed and the notes.

In an interview printed on the album liner, Arrau sums up his feelings about Liszt — opinions that stand behind his interpretive mastery:

"Any pianist approaching the Liszt literature, to be able to interpret the music authentically, must have a tremendous dynamic range and a sovereign mastery of the

keyboard. Krause always used to say that Liszt demanded more technique than one actually needed, so that the performance looked and sounded as if without effort.

The words are mirrored by this performance. Technique is assumed, expression and rich tone are the aim.

The excitement comes from Arrau's secure power — you know he could zip through all 12 bravura bits again the moment he's finished — and that's the stuff real virtuosity is made of.

LOUISE KENNGOTT



# Claudio Arrau at 75

## A birthday tribute by Richard Osborne

"I was of late as petty to his ends/As is the morn-dew on the myrtle leaf/To his grand sea". The words are Shakespeare's and it takes a simile of epic size to focus the splendour—the comparative depth, range and richness—of the art of Claudio Arrau. For this dapper, elegant man stands as a colossus amongst pianists, daunting and moving audiences wherever he plays.

"Music rebukes us", he once said, "for it is wider and richer than any of us knows". And it is the very scope of Arrau's art, matched with the deep humanity which emanates from him, which prompts us to number him among the very greatest pianists of the century.

Arrau was first heard in London in the spring of 1920. He played Scarlatti and Bach's *Goldberg Variations* in the Aeolian Hall and was immediately engaged to appear a fortnight later at the Royal Albert Hall in a concert ostensibly devoted to the art of Dame Nellie Melba. He played Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole* and brought the house down; bow followed bow until he felt a hand on his shoulder. It was Dame Nellie. "Now that's enough, young man", she murmured; and the young lion was ushered back to his cage.

Privately Arrau is a warm, witty, infinitely courteous man. An enquiring person, he is more than likely in a disarming way to interview his interviewer. And he is a marvellous conversationalist, never the vulgar *raconteur*. Blessed with a distinctive mind, he recognizes the fine dividing line between the barb which destroys and wit which is salutary. Berlioz's remark on the eighteen-year-old Saint-Saëns's First Symphony—"very good, but the young man lacks inexperience"—pains him only because it is often misquoted ("... lacks experience", the merest pedantry).

Arrau is also an inveterate observer of the world about him. I sometimes think when he is in London that he knows more about the hidden curiosities of the city than do many of its native musicians. In discussion Arrau will tell you that, a prodigy from the first, he gave his début recital in Chillan at the age of five. Dressed in silks and velvets (to this day he sports a magnificent Lisztian opera cloak after recitals) he played Beethoven variations, a Mozart sonata and Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. Then, in 1911, the Chilean Government passed an Act of Congress enabling the young boy to travel to Berlin where for two years before meeting his much-fabled teacher, Martin Krause, he was poorly taught. Krause, who died when Arrau was only fifteen, gave him an education which went far beyond notes and technique. A pupil of Liszt, Krause was able to teach Arrau much about Liszt's command of the *bel canto* melodic style, about his fabulously varied chordal control and the like. But more than this, Krause taught the young pianist to seek out the music's poetic and imaginative core. If you ask Arrau today wherein lies Liszt's greatness as a composer he will talk, not of virtuosity, but of mystic beauty, of a kind of Wordsworthian exaltation. Though anyone who has heard Arrau play the B minor Sonata or, say, "Chasse-neige", the last of the *Transcendental Studies*, a snow-blown stormscape of terrible splendour, will know that here, as elsewhere in Liszt, virtuosity and mystic beauty are sublimely linked.

"How can you begin to play Schumann", Arrau speculated "if you know nothing of Jean Paul or E. T. A. Hoffmann? *Flugeljahre* is *Carnaval* and what is *Kreisleriana* without Hoffmann!" Later, in another conversation, Arrau—memories of Krause clearly shining through—

ruminatively added, "I conceive teaching as being something very creative. It is like being a sculptor. The danger is always that we want to make copies of ourselves. But, no, we must unfold what is there within the marble".

A prodigy himself, Arrau is aware of their problems. "The time of transition, that is a terrible period", he recalls. On paper, the young Arrau seems to have had few problems. For ten years after Krause's death he won prize upon prize, culminating in the Grand Prix in Geneva in 1927, where Cortot and Artur Schnabel were among the judges. In 1920, at the age of 17, Arrau had made his début with the Berlin Philharmonic playing the Schubert-Liszt *Wanderer Fantasy* under Karl Muck. At the age of 22 he was back at the Stern Conservatory in Berlin, now a professor. But there were times when things went less well. Unaccountable technical failures forced Arrau to ponder deeply, as many great musicians have done, the spiritual and psychological basis of the creative life, thus beginning for him a long and fruitful dialogue with the works of Jung. But here Arrau adds a note of warning. "If you meddle with psychology you must be careful not to clear away too much. You must clear away only those inhibitions and tensions which become impediments".

Arrau's habit of playing big programmes, the musical Odysseys with which we are now so familiar, began in those years. In Berlin in the 1930s he played all the keyboard music of Bach in twelve evenings, the Mozart sonatas in five, the Beethoven and Schubert sonatas, the whole of Chopin. His reasons were largely personal: "I wanted to penetrate the language of each composer".

And Bach was at the starting point of this voyage? "At this stage I had virtually devoted my life to his music and then, quite suddenly, I decided that one cannot play him on the piano". Didn't Furtwängler play Bach on the piano, with lid open on the top notch, I asked, remembering Arrau's delight in rare musical phenomena? "Oh, yes!". Arrau's eyes lit up with amusement. "It was so beautiful! So much pedal that he made the cadenzas of the Brandenburg Concertos sound like Debussy". Arrau asked whether I knew a better recording than Furtwängler's of Schubert's *Great C* major Symphony (DG Historic mono 2535 808, 5/77). I confessed not, though there have been some fine recordings since the war. Arrau remembers vividly playing the Schumann Concerto with

Furtwängler on several occasions in Berlin. (Arrau, Gieseking, Fischer, Cortot: the names crop up again and again in Berlin Philharmonic programmes of the 1920s and 1930s.) "In the first movement one would get from him suddenly a kind of 'divination'—a sudden insight into the music as it was happening. And yet you were never at a loss because his sense of ensemble, his give and take, was so perfect. It was marvellous".

Divination. It is Arrau's favourite word. A man full of fine aphorisms quietly spoken in the natural pauses of conversation, he added "The greatest interpretative miracles have always to do with divination".

But if interpretation has to do with divination, it has to do, too, with pain, and with healing. Those who consider Arrau, like his great contemporary Rudolf Serkin, to be something of a seer among pianists, recognize in both the pain, the labour, of re-creation. Like great sculptors, they hurt themselves on the very inertia of the marble they are trying to shape. The hurt, though, is less palpably felt with Arrau than with Serkin because, paradoxically, Arrau conjures his Promethean and adamant sonorousities by the gentlest touch. He is both lion and lamb.

I asked Arrau about his conception of the sound he draws from the piano. "I have a vision of a certain sound. It must never be edgy or cutting. My whole way of playing is against this kind of thing. [His hand slices down against the arm of the chair.] In a way, the whole weight of my body goes into the keys. As a young player I did away with many conventions. There was a convention that you never used your thumb on the black keys; and people would avoid fourth and fifth fingerings simply because they hadn't developed the proper rotational movement of the wrist. Once you have this rotational control it is the arm which controls the notes, not the fingers. So often people say to me, how do you do it, those trills with the fourth and fifth?"

With a technique so fabulously based (a technique which serves Liszt and late Beethoven—not even Horowitz has that) it is no wonder that Arrau celebrates his 75th birthday with a brand new recording [reviewed on page 1440—*Ed.*] of one of the most fearful of all pianistic challenges: the 12 *Transcendental Studies* of Liszt. This technical surety also makes for a life emancipated from fears of stiffening fingers. A great gardener, Arrau will be seen at his home in Vermont, to the horror of friends, snipping and pruning, gloveless, for hours on end.

When Arrau played the Liszt B minor Sonata in London last June I was forced to recall Joachim Kaiser's words—"Whenever Arrau appears even the most hardened and snobbish concert-goer is startled afresh by the feeling, my God, how this man can play"—so diabolic



Claudio Arrau who celebrates his 75th birthday on February 6th

[photo: Phonogram]



was the concentration at times (wonderful this, for Arrau is the least diabolical of men), so sensuous and chaste the lyricism, each skein of melody given a pure yet tactile beauty consonant with its innermost character. With the structure taut and textures now unfathomably grand, now spun to a pointed stellar fineness, it was a reading, as Meirion Bowen wrote in the *Guardian*, which "said all".

As for the pedal, what Busoni called "the soul of the piano", Arrau uses it with special skill, placing bass harmonies and alto voices so that they form the perfectly suspended backdrop against which melody, so vital in the music of Liszt, Chopin, Schumann and Brahms, can be exquisitely or movingly declaimed. Certainly, as the late Sir Neville Cardus never tired of pointing out, there is nothing evasive or irresponsibly fey about Chopin's romanticism as Arrau evokes it. The great and now too little regarded American critic, James Huneker, wrote of the B minor Prelude—"The introduction is like a madly jutting rock, from which the eagle spirit of the composer precipitates itself". And eagle-spirited is what Arrau's Chopin invariably is. Pianistically Arrau enriches Chopin's lines, gives them a deep *bel canto* colouring much as Maria Callas was wont to do in the lines of arias by Bellini and Donizetti. And, like Callas, Arrau sees ornament as intrinsic, both to structure and to expression, never merely decorative.

To some Arrau's deployment of ornament, his penetrating left hand, the *appoggiaturas* that can be either caressive or laboured, trills that both snap and flow, can be disconcerting. I have seen it said that Arrau plays the *Adagio grazioso* of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 31 No. 1 'awkwardly', the coloratura inhibited by sombre, chunky left hand detailing, the perspectives closing and darkening midway. Yet Beethoven's music, tunnelling through the darker recesses of the imagination, clearly demands this; the last page heavy with trills, the air, as it were filled with the sound of beating wings.

Such decisive honesty can be uncomfortable. The divine fire and complex, slow-charged expressiveness of Arrau's playing of the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 109 (only Schnabel, very different, is as fine in my experience) is not easy to assimilate at a first or second hearing. As for Arrau's reading of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata (Philips 6580 104, 11/75) such powerful affirmations and deeply felt falterings before great issues of tone and rhythm ("the fugue should sound like some divine rage", Arrau murmured when we discussed his interpretation) cannot be expected to find any easy or immediate response from listeners or critics. It puts the music beyond everyday assimilation, beyond the more predictable expectations of most of us.

It is true, nonetheless, that Arrau at times lacks the easy felicity of Kempff, his great contemporary and antitype. Cardus, whose admiration for Arrau's Beethoven, Brahms and Chopin knew few, if any, bounds, once regretted that "this most joyous and young and amusing of men" did not occasionally smile a little more in his playing. Used to dwelling among the mountain peaks of the repertoire, Arrau the pianist has about him a certain austerity, Cardus added, which it is not easy for him to cast off. The Sonata, Op. 27 No. 1 of Beethoven, which Edwin Fischer claimed he never understood till he heard a young girl play it and which emerges in Kempff's hands with all the confiding beauty of a Gainsborough portrait is, with Arrau, perhaps too intense. Yet this warm, civilized, elegant man (who chided Cortot for lacking 'squareness' in Beethoven) can relax, bathing the tiny G major Sonata in the colours of some sun-blessed, tree-shaded Tuscan landscape. And something like the E major Sonata, Op. 14 No. 1 is granted a Mozartian breadth (Arrau's or Busoni's Mozart, that is), voices harmonized and juxtaposed as though by some great string quartet.

And Mozart? "I remember Busoni playing nine of the concertos with the Berlin Philharmonic just a few months before he died. He used a very full sound, against the custom of the day". And then, touching on something Arrau feels with increasing depth—"You know, this idea of playing Mozart with a subdued sound is so *wide* of the mark". (Expansive gesture.) And then, subsiding, wondering and a trifle perplexed—"For such a musician, who really created the whole cosmos . . .". On another occasion I remember Arrau saying, "You know, there is so much tragedy in Mozart's music, and when he is tragic there is no solution. No solution".

Arrau's Mozart is too little attended to these days, though I remember the late Deryck Cooke in *GRAMOPHONE* praising his incomparable sense of the full-bodied eighteenth-century style, reviewing one of Arrau's several Beethoven records of the late 1950s and early 1960s which EMI could well reissue. Arrau's Columbia recordings of the concertos, and his earlier recordings of the *Waldstein* and Op. 110 Sonatas rank among the finest post-war performances on record, better scaled to the gramophone perhaps than his later readings of these two sonatas for Philips. But, then, so many of Arrau's finest recordings require reissue.

At 75, having completed for the time being his gramophone survey of the music of Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, Schumann and Liszt, Arrau is able to turn his attentions to Schubert. "Schubert is for me the last problem of interpretation. He is so difficult; there are so many elements in his art. There is the dramatic scope of Beethoven and the simplicity of Austrian peasant music; wonderful lyrical writing and great chastity". Chastity, I rather wonderingly echoed? "Oh, yes, that too". We talked of Schnabel ("in the 1920s, you know, his technique was flawless; later he became so tense") and Eduard Erdman, both great Schubert players; and Arrau asked me what I thought of the three posthumous pieces. He had been worried by the dismissive remark of some commentator. "Sometimes I feel that

musicologists lose the capacity to experience the music. They can trace a modulation, but they cannot write about the way it reveals its expressive power. And isn't it ridiculous", Arrau adds, digressing slightly "that so often we hear the last movement of the last sonata played as a kind of gay piece? How can Schubert have been happy when he was so near to death and suffering so much? The music is full of anxiety . . . so obvious when you know his language".

After a concert Arrau likes to meet people. Indeed, so devoted and varied are his friends that were he a poet, rather than being simply a passionate and informed reader of poetry, I could imagine him writing of his friends, so much does he value them, as Yeats did in his great poem on Robert Gregory and other, later, masterpieces. This is itself a fine tribute to Arrau the man. As for Arrau the musician—miraculously, at 75, a musician seemingly in his prime—I first heard about him at university where I remember a friend talking late into the evening about the experience of hearing Arrau play the Brahms Concertos in London in the late 1950s. It had been for him the kind of formative, all-embracing experience which brings someone to music for life. And I know of other people, who rarely attend piano recitals or concerts of classical music, who will go to hear him play. The appeal, I think, is easy to determine: for Arrau is one of a line of great artists to whom music demonstrably matters. For others, more regular attenders, the appeal of his interpretations is that, like great wines, they are better for laying down, noble when lesser vintages, with poorer vinification, are flaccid on the palate.

My final thought is that Arrau is first and foremost a seeker; only then a communicator. As I said at the outset, he is more than likely in a disarming way to interview the interviewer. We wish him well on his birthday

[To celebrate Claudio Arrau's 75th birthday on February 6th several recordings are being released by Phonogram this month and the reviews appear in this issue—Ed.]

GRAMOPHONE  
FEBRUARY 1978



# Iron Man

Few pianists have played as energetically for so long as Claudio Arrau. For 70 of his 75 years, the Chilean-born maestro has been performing before the public. Only recently has he reduced his output

to a hundred concerts a year, and he seldom contemplates a sabbatical: "I'm afraid if I stop I won't have the courage to start again." Work is a drug that Arrau cannot live without. Starting in the '30s, he engaged in a series of marathon exploits, playing all of Bach's solo works for the clavier and, later on, performing the same kind of intensive, almost nonstop, exploration of Mozart, Schubert, Liszt and Beethoven piano works.

**Fierce Aplomb:** The massive program he played last week for his 75th birthday celebration in New York—Beethoven's Sonata No. 26 in E flat major ("Les Adieux"), Liszt's giant B Minor Sonata and the exuberant Brahms Sonata No. 3 in F minor—was no less challenging. He attacked the pieces in typical Arrau fashion: with fierce aplomb and with scrupulous respect for the notes as written. He is about as far removed as possible from the romantic approach of a Horowitz. Arrau does not indulge in personality, take liberties with the score or yield to the temptations of emotional abandon.

He is also legendary for his anxiety before a concert. He welcomes it. "If you think that going out on stage is like going for a walk," he says, "your playing will lack intensity. Of course if there's too much anxiety you're paralyzed. Go see a psychiatrist." But during last week's program, Arrau's fingers moved with easy eloquence, seemingly without a care in the world. There is great contrast between him and Rudolf Serkin, no less an intellectual pianist but one whose confrontations with the instrument often seem a matter of life or death.

**Sparkling Clarity:** In both the Beethoven and the Liszt, Arrau began at a stately pace. He was perhaps a shade too reverent in the Beethoven, a shade too somber in the Brahms. Rarely did he permit himself the romantic luxury of letting go. But everything

marched with sparkling clarity—within carefully preserved limitations. He is a thinking man's pianist, and in all three works he seemed to be preoccupied with architecture. In the Beethoven, whose three movements are so wide apart emotionally, he was at pains to give each statement its own distinct character, creating a live-theater illusion of time and space. In the Liszt he was brilliant in reconciling the work's emotional opposites, in harnessing all of its restless tensions. And throughout the five movements of the Brahms sonata, he was busy tightening all the nuts and bolts of the work's sprawling, amorphous structure. At the end of the program, a birthday cake arrived and Arrau still had plenty of breath left to blow out all the candles with one puff.

# Newsweek

February 20, 1978 / \$1.00

Claudio Arrau's prodigious talent was

recognized early by his country. At the age of 7, this wunderkind, accompanied by his family, was sent by the Chilean Government to study in Berlin. He became a pupil of Martin Krause, who himself had been a student of Liszt. Young Arrau soon began to give public performances in Europe, entertaining kings and queens who were amazed at this Mozart reincarnate. In 1913, Queen Marie of Romania gave him a necktie pin with a royal M and a crown of diamonds.

**Faithfulness:** Arrau recalls meeting or hearing such piano legends as Ferruccio Busoni, Teresa Carreño and Eugène d'Albert. He himself played with such conductors as Arthur Nikisch and Karl Muck. As he looks back, he acknowledges the influence of Wanda Landowska on his understanding of Bach, of Bruno Walter who illuminated Chopin, of Erich Kleiber who did the same for Schumann, and of Artur Schnabel, who "opened my eyes to faithfulness to the text as the basis of all interpretation."

But Arrau hardly dwells on the past. "One advantage of age is you don't have to appease the public," he says. "Young pianists try too hard to please, to make a success." For the young performer, he recommends psychoanalysis, a remedy he has espoused all his life, the way doctors used to prescribe castor oil. "Now I can pretty much solve the problems for myself. That's another advantage of age. Experience gets rid of the superfluous. I think I play now in a more natural and spontaneous way. Your personality gets more integrated." Seven decades after he began, Arrau's music making sounds deceptively easy. But it celebrates a hard-won victory—the integration of a personality with innate musical genius.



Camera 1

Arrau and wife celebrating No. 75



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ARRAU (ATTN: ENTERTAINMENT; ARTS EDITORS) (3 TAKES)

ADV SUN DEC. 11

BY MICHAEL KERNAN

(C) 1977, THE WASHINGTON POST

CHICAGO - WE MEET PIANIST CLAUDIO ARRAU IN THE GLOOMY LOBBY OF THE  
AMBASSADOR EAST AN HOUR BEFORE HIS MATINEE. A SNOWY FRIDAY.

PLAINTIVELY, HE CONFIDES THAT THE HOTEL'S RESTAURANTS AND ROOM  
SERVICE WERE CLOSED THE DAY BEFORE, THANKSGIVING, AND HE HAD TO  
EAT AT A NEON-AND-STAINLESS-STEEL PLACE CALLED MITCHELL'S. HE  
NEVER EATS BEFORE A CONCERT. HE IS HUNGRY.

WE CLIMB INTO THE ORCHESTRA'S RENTED LIMO. HE'S AGLOW OVER THE  
BALLET FILM "THE TURNING POINT" ("THE MOST WONDERFUL  
EXPERIENCE!") AND THE WEDNESDAY-NIGHT CONCERT ("THE ORCHESTRA  
PLAYED LIKE ANGELS!"), HIS FIRST TIME WITH THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY





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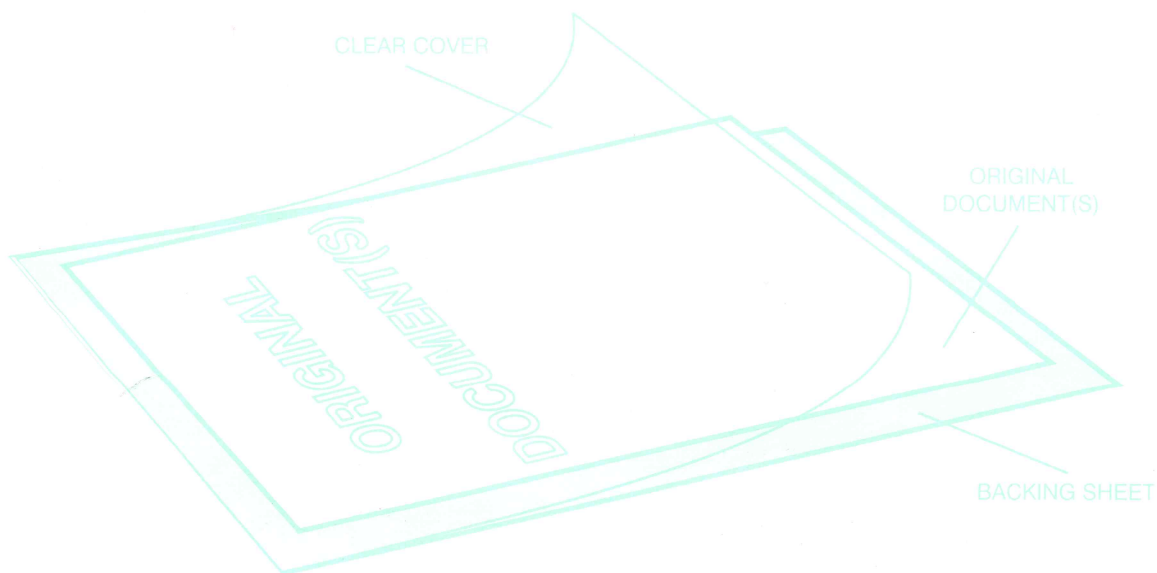
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“THEY TRIED TO CANCEL NEW HAVEN,” SAYS FRIEDE F. ROTHE, HIS PERSONAL MANAGER, PROTECTOR AND FRIEND FOR 30 YEARS. “THEY FORGOT ABOUT THANKSGIVING. USUALLY HE GETS A FREE DAY BETWEEN. HE HAD 20 INVITATIONS TO THANKSGIVING DINNER HERE BUT TURNED THEM ALL DOWN AND SPENT THE DAY IN HIS ROOM, READING.”

AFTER THE TUESDAY CONCERT IN NEW HAVEN HE GOT TO BED AT 1 A.M., SLEPT UNTIL 6, MET THE LIMO AT 8, FLEW INTO CHICAGO AT 11 AND BY 1:30 WAS REHEARSING WITH THE SYMPHONY FOR A CONCERT THAT NIGHT.

THROUGH NEXT MARCH HE WILL DO 48 CONCERTS IN 26 CITIES, TORONTO TO PALM BEACH, LOS ANGELES TO WASHINGTON, WHERE HE OPENS TUESDAY NIGHT WITH THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY UNDER JAMES DEPREIST. THEN 10 DAYS OF REST. THEN OFF TO EUROPE FOR RECITALS THROUGH JUNE.

THEN AUSTRALIA IN 1979 AND MAYBE MEXICO, AND JAPAN IN 1980. HE USED TO DO 150 CONCERTS A YEAR. HE'S DOWN TO 100 NOW. NEXT FE. 6 HE WILL BE 75 YEARS OLD.

“WE THOUGHT HE'D BE FREE THIS SUMMER,” ROTHE SAYS AS THE LIMO NUDGES THROUGH THE HOLIDAY SHOPPING TRAFFIC. “USUALLY HE TEACHES IN THE SUMMER, AND LAST SUMMER HE FINISHED EDITING ALL THE BEETHOVEN SONATAS AFTER EIGHT YEARS. BUT THEN SCHIRMER'S ASKED FOR A NEW EDITION OF THE FIVE BEETHOVEN CONCERTOS. SO HE'LL BE DOING THAT ALL SUMMER. AND THEN THE ROAD AGAIN.”

HE LOVES IT. A TOURIST. VISITS MUSEUMS, GOES TO PLAYS, ROAMS THE CITIES OF THE WORLD. HE ALSO LOVES TO SIT IN HIS ROOM AND READ.

TWO, THREE HOURS A DAY, AT LEAST.”





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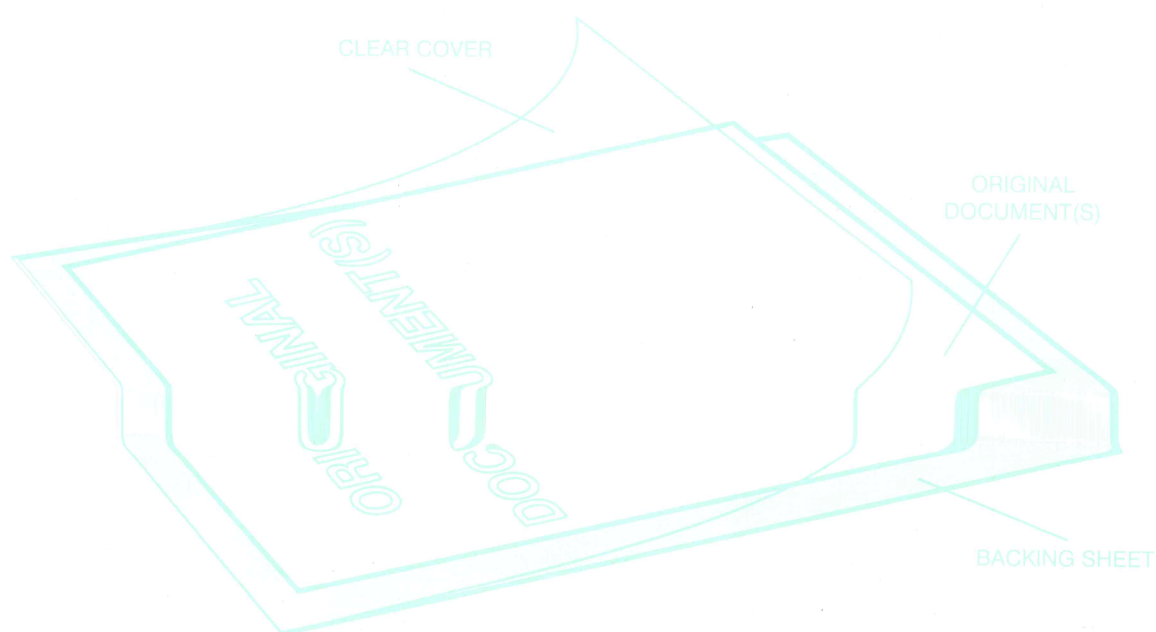
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"HOW CAN YOU KEEP UP WITH THE WORLD WITH LESS?" ADAM SMITH'S

"POWERS OF MIND." REREADING "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT." ("IT

SHOCKED ME; THIS TIME. THAT WORLD OF CRAZY PEOPLE. FOR THE FIRST

TIME I FELT IT WAS A LITTLE FAR-FETCHED.") MARQUEZ. FUENTES.

JUNG. ANYTHING HE CAN GET HIS HANDS ON; LIKE A MAN MAROONED.

SOMETIMES HIS WIFE OF NEARLY 40 YEARS COMES WITH HIM. A FORMER

SINGER HERSELF; GERMAN (THEY MET IN 1935 IN GERMANY; HE PROMISED

TO CALL HER; SHE WAITED THREE MONTHS; LATER LEARNED HE HAD BEEN

PLAYING ENTIRE KEYBOARD WORKS OF BACH IN 12 SENSATIONAL RECITALS);

NOW THREE CHILDREN; SIX GRANDCHILDREN. NONE OF THEM HAS ANYTHING

TO DO WITH MUSIC.

"IT'S HARD ON HIS WIFE," ROTHE SAYS. "AFTER A CONCERT HE HAS

TO UNWIND; IT TAKES HOURS; HE MAY STAY AWAKE TO 3 A.M. BUT HE

CONSTANTLY RENEWS HIMSELF. HE'LL PUT TWO CHAIRS TOGETHER FACING

AND SIT THERE WITH HIS FEET UP AND HIS HEAD RESTING VERY

CAREFULLY - HE KEEPS HIS HAIR SLICKED DOWN; BECAUSE HE CAN'T

STAND MUSICIANS WHO AFFECT THOSE DRAMATIC MATTIC MANES OF HAIR ALL

WILD; AND HE GOES OFF TO SLEEP JUST LIKE THAT FOR A HALF-HOUR;

AN HOUR."

BETWEEN DATES HE GOES HOME TO LONG ISLAND; BUT STILL THERE ARE

TIMES WHEN HE MUST CARRY CLOTHES FOR TWO CLIMATES; LEAVE BERKELEY

JAN. 17; ARRIVE CINCINNATI JAN. 19. LUGGAGE: THREE DRESS SUITS;

THREE PAIRS SHOES; BLACK VELVET CAPE TO ABSORB THE SWEAT AFTER

A CONCERT. A DOZEN JARS OF PILLS. ROSEHIPS. THE BATTERED SATCHEL

CONTAINING HIS PERSONAL SCORES; NEVER CHECKED; NEVER OUT OF HIS





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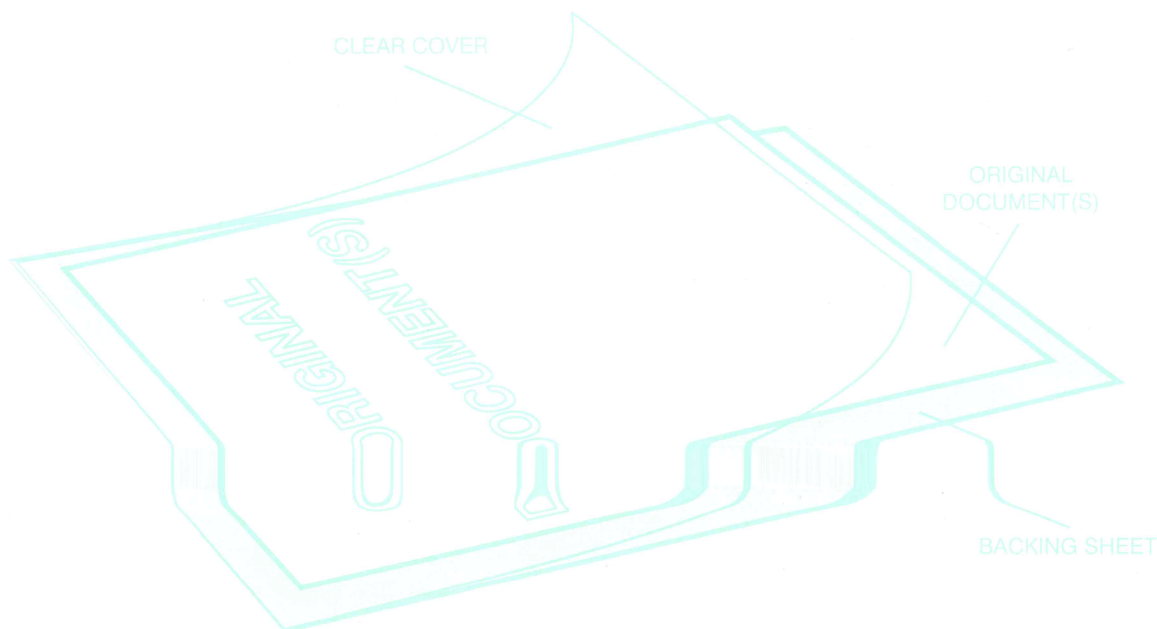
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SIGHT.

SIX WEEKS IN SUMMER HE GOES TO THE VERMONT PLACE TO MEDITATE AND  
PRACTICE AND GARDEN AND CONTEMPLATE HIS T'ANG PORCELAINS AND  
PRE-COLUMBIAN ART AND WORK ON THE BEETHOVEN EDITION AND RECEIVE  
PILGRIMS WHO WANT HIM TO LISTEN TO THEM PLAY.

THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO. HE NO LONGER PLAYS BACH; BECAUSE HE FEELS  
IT SHOULD BE DONE ON A HARPSICHORD; SO HE IS THINKING OF TAKING  
ON THE HARPSICHORD. FOR A TIME HE WAS IN JUNGIAN ANALYSIS; IS  
STILL FASCINATED WITH JUNG'S IDEAS.

ADV SUN DEC. 11

(XORE TO COME)

HH SENT DEC. 9





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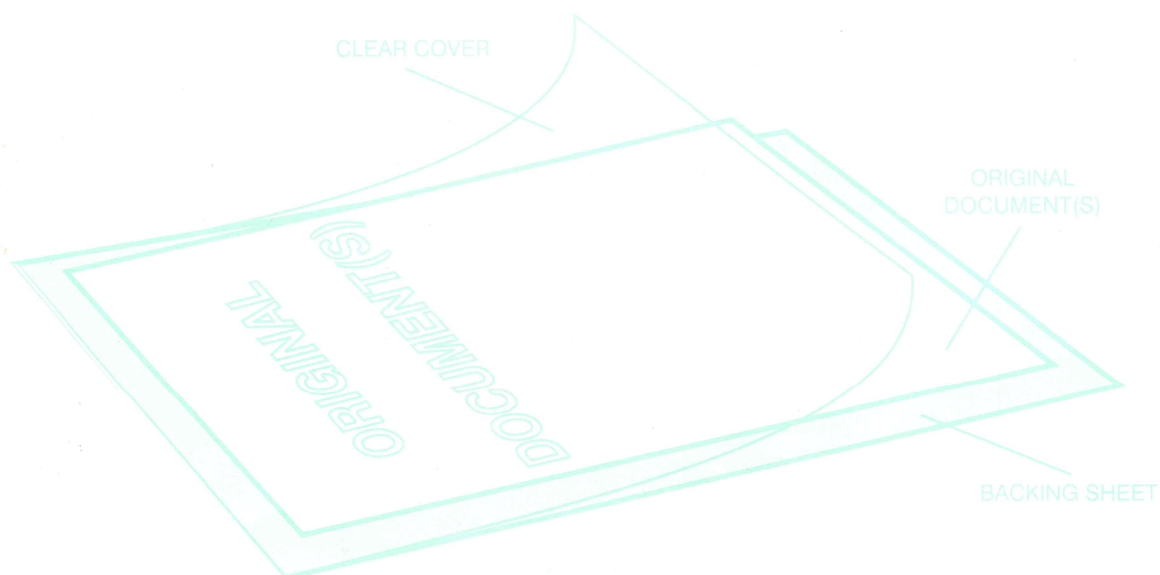
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